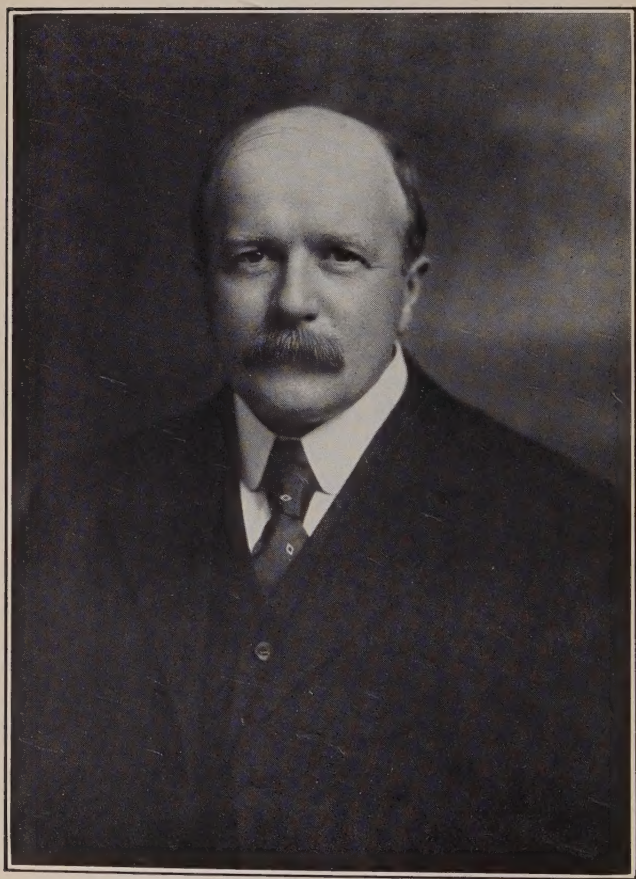


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CHARLES B. STOVER



Charles R. Stover

July 14, 1861 — April 24, 1929

His Life and Personality

by

J. K. PAULDING

Together with Some Tributes
from His Friends



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Part One

LIFE AND PERSONALITY

By J. K. PAULDING

IF SOME will be found to criticize the frankness of these pages, its justification must lie in the conviction of the author that in the presence of so great a soul as that sought to be depicted here nothing but the truth will serve. He will not object, I think, to have something of the struggles of his heart laid bare to teach us lesser men the meaning that inheres in every human aspiration towards the realization of a better world. Nothing base or ignoble is here revealed because there was nothing such in his composition. What weakness may be manifest serves rather as a foil the better to set forth the real greatness and originality of his character.

I.

CHARLES BUNSTEIN STOVER was born on July 14, 1861, at Riegelsville, at that time a small village, in Montgomery County, Pennsylvania, where his father had been born before him. All his forebears were of German stock, those on his father's side, whose name was originally spelt Stauffer, coming to this country in 1749 from Rhenish Prussia. Among his ancestors were many who fought in the Revolutionary War and were accorded, upon its close, lands upon which they settled and brought up their children in the devout Christianity of their inheritance.

His father, Cyrus Stover, kept a small store at Riegelsville, where, as far as can now be learned, he passed his entire life. Much of the trade at this little store was of the commodity type, the country people bringing their produce to exchange for staple goods. He lived but a short while after his marriage to Anna Bunstein, Stover's mother, and was not widely known, but is described by his brother-in-law, Howard Bunstein, of Easton, Pa., as "a gentleman of culture, of a sweet, lovely personality, one of God's own sons." The loss of such a husband led his widow to speak of her own life as "sad and blighted", and her son, in writing his

uncle on the occasion of a later family bereavement, quoted from her Diary: "If it were not for the comforting, consoling passages in God's word, life would be intolerable, and a release from the weary burden far preferable," and again, several years later, "Oh, if there were no better land where the links of love's severed chains are to be again united, who could bear this heart-sickness for which earth has no remedy?" From two such parents Stover derived the deep seriousness of his nature, including his pre-occupation with religion.

His ancestors on the maternal side are interred in the cemetery at Hecktown, Pa. They were honest, God-fearing folk, deeply religious, and highly regarded in both business and professional pursuits. His grandfather, Oliver Bunstein, was a merchant of Easton, and thither, after his father's death, Stover and his mother returned to live with his widowed grandmother, Esther Levan Bunstein, born at Kaetztown, a village near Reading. His grandmother's house at Easton was to remain his home throughout his boyhood.

Of his childhood the record is scant. His uncle, already quoted, tells us that he was always a good boy, and one of his boyhood friends writes, "As I think of Charlie now, I can remember his universal popularity, due mostly to his lovable character. While rather shy and retiring, he was always ready to share in our boyhood games and enjoyments; never aggressive but always ready to insist upon his rights as he saw them. Very popular also with

the ladies, although he rarely sought their company deliberately. A studious character—he read a great deal—gave considerable thought to certain schools of philosophy, and reasoned much with himself. During his college days he devoted more and more time to philosophical problems, and I have always felt certain in my own mind that some of these had much effect upon his later life, and not always for his own good and peace of mind. He was a very good friend to me, and from our boyhood days I have always admired him greatly. He labored always for the good of others, mostly those less fortunate, invariably without display of any kind, and his works will live after him.”

This takes us obviously beyond his childish days and gives rise to several reflections, of which the most pertinent here is that his nature must have been lovable indeed to win such wide-spread appreciation, since no one less than he ever courted the arts of popularity. Also the phrase “very popular with the ladies” rings strangely when we recall his later shy withdrawal from all that side of life that is regarded as typically feminine.

Much of his time as a boy was spent with his uncle and aunt at Milford, Delaware. Here his uncle, Rev. Henry Levan Bunstein, was for forty-seven years pastor of the First Presbyterian Church, after having previously tried the law and journalism, both of which he renounced because of his yearning for the ministry. The influence of this uncle must have been considerable upon Stover in

his early days for he followed him both to Lafayette College and later to the Union Theological Seminary in New York. He was a man of scholarly mind, a graduate of Harvard Law School, interested in public affairs and education as well as religion, and for a time the proprietor of a newspaper of his own. We have the testimony of his wife that Stover was very fond of their children, one of whom was named Carl Stover for him, while upon the occasion of the death of another, a little girl whom he calls the most precocious child he ever knew, he writes a touching letter, full of Scriptural comfort, from Berlin, where he is at the time studying theology. It was the custom of this family to spend their summers at Ocean Grove where he was often with them.

Of his college days at Lafayette and the Union Theological Seminary (with the exception of the references to his reading contained in the letter of his boyhood friend) we have no record except that while a student at the latter institution he was sent to do mission work on the Bowery and in a chapel of St. George's Church on First Avenue.

He passed the entire summer with his uncle's family helping with the church work before going, in 1883, to Billfield, Billings County, Dakota, to preach to the cowboys. In a letter written on the way out there he speaks of his meeting with a fine old cleric, Rev. J. O. Sloane, in whose pulpit in Mandan, Dakota, "I preached my first sermon." One is tempted to quote much of this letter, it is

so characteristic of the later Stover. Of this man he says: "I think him one of the most spiritual men I have ever met and without a particle of religious cant, which is so detestable in a man otherwise good. I have been with him much during the past three days—and nearly every man and woman seeks to know 'Elder' or 'Father' or 'Doctor' Sloane. Even the roughest characters respect him and are friendly towards him, for he has ever been their friend. Like Christ he has not disregarded the outcast members of humanity. He could never have said, 'There is a little church around the corner which will perform the service'," and Stover goes on to tell of a Christmas present of two hundred and fifty-six silver half-dollars sent this man by the outcast women of the town in token of their gratitude for his ministrations, which were, Stover says, in the spirit of the words, "Go, sin no more." Of him again he says, "For goodness I adore, but it must be a *manly* goodness."

In the letter I have quoted above we find also an account of his own preaching in this good man's church. "I could not," he writes, "resist his appeal to have me preach—Here then yesterday morning I preached my first sermon. Immediately after the service I had to take charge of his Bible Class without preparation of the lesson, for he had told me nothing about it beforehand. He seemed to think that I could do anything which he might ask of me. I have not even yet received my trunk and in it are all my notes. I had at no time written even

five lines of my speech yesterday morning, and had his importunity not been so strong, I would not have gone into the pulpit. I had simply an outline in my head, and what I said was *extempore*."

While with this good bishop (one likes to think of him as a bishop, since he was surely the shepherd of his flock), Stover received his appointment as preacher to two new towns, Billfield and Little Missouri, near the western frontier of the territory, and the farthest Western preaching station of the Presbyterian Church.

"It seems now," he writes, "that my wishes are to be largely granted. The towns are said to be in the hands of the devil. There has never been any preaching in them. Nearby are the famous 'Bad Lands' in whose beautiful wild and winding recesses I hope to take many a stroll this summer." His station was near Pyramid Park and about four hundred miles east of the great National Park.

The rest of the letter is taken up with a description of the country through which he has passed, and he mentions among the scenes that delighted him "the herding of cattle, the fast-fleeing antelope, the tents of straggling Indians, the busy life of pioneer town main streets." Nor was all his interest in what was to be seen from the car-window; he made many acquaintances among his fellow passengers and remarks that very often when one of them reached the end of his journey he felt as if an old friend had left him.

II.

ON HIS return from the West he was able to carry out with his friend and classmate, Frank March (Lafayette '81), a long-projected plan to go to Europe together as soon as they were able to save the necessary money. Eustace Conway, son of the well-known scholar and lecturer, Moncure D. Conway, then in charge of the South Place Chapel (later Ethical Society), accompanied them on the trip, and to Conway's house they went upon their arrival in London. There they knew him, according to the testimony of Conway's daughter, Mrs. Sawyer, as "the young St. John" by reason of his youthful rosy looks.

His stay with the Conways was a short one, and it seems probable that after a sight-seeing trip with his friend March, who returned to America, he went to Berlin, where we find him in 1885, a student in the theological faculty of the University. Here he was joined by his Uncle Henry in the summer of 1886 and they traveled together.

But already at the beginning of the year 1885 he began to be assailed by doubts of the validity of his own beliefs. Here is his own account of the matter: "Suddenly and mysteriously, like a thunder-crash in the clear heavens, came the first of a

phalanx of terrible doubts, beginning with an attack on the genuineness of my divine calling to the Christian ministry for which I had just finished my regular theological education. This first doubt, which brought so many other destructive ones in its train, came from without in the reading of pietistic literature, to which I had gone in simplicity for spiritual food. Thus innocently began that assault upon my faith which, after years of agony, led to its total eclipse."

Later in the letter from which I have quoted (written long after the events to which he refers) he writes that in the light of experience he would not, had he to do it over again adopt the Christian ministry as his life-work. "Here," he says, "lay my first great mistake—so it seems. And yet even of this I cannot be sure. Who can so completely scan all the lines of the complex design of life that he can with certainty say of any work undertaken sincerely and unselfishly, it was a mistake! What we consider mistakes may be parts of a higher unity."

He returned from Europe with his uncle and stayed with him and his family in Milford before coming to New York in search of some kind of work for humanity to which he might dedicate his life. But wherever he proffered his services he met with rebuff because of the unsatisfactory nature of his personal attitude toward the creeds. Doubtless it is to himself he refers when in a paper written for the Johns Hopkins University in January, 1889,

he writes "I know that one, inspired by the love of Christ and his fellow-men, applied for work to a person in authority in city evangelization and was dismissed with the rash words 'The Lord has no work for you to do,' because, forsooth his theology seemed 'wishy-washy' to the rigid dogmatist."

First in the person of Stanton Coit, at that time a young assistant of Dr. Felix Adler in the Society for Ethical Culture, he met a man ready to accept him for what he was rather than for what he believed. For his assistance at this crisis Stover never forgot Coit, whose friendship he cherished beyond, perhaps, that of any other, to the end of his life. The first work found for him was the administration of the new model tenement houses erected by the Ethical Culture Society in Cherry Street, where he collected rents for several years. These houses, started by Felix Adler with the assistance of Prof. Edwin R. A. Seligman, marked the beginning of the tenement-house reform movement in America.

Coit had just founded, in September, 1886, the Neighborhood Guild, a type of organization containing the germ of the later Settlement movement, which was afterwards to develop into the University Settlement, and it was here, amid the crowded tenements of the lower East Side, that Stover came to him, upon the recommendation of Rev. Lyman Abbott, only a few weeks after he had taken up residence at No. 146 Forsyth Street, in the basement of which building he had started a kindergarten, with classes and clubs.

Coit recalls the interview very well. After hearing from Stover of the loss of his religious belief, he said to him, "But although you have lost faith in the Christian doctrine, you still believe, do you not, in the Christ-like life?" "Yes, more than ever!" was Stover's reply. "Then why not come here and help me and live out the kind of life you believe in?" There and then Stover decided to come. He and Elmer Forbes were the first two men to associate themselves with Coit's work.

Coit returned to England in August, 1887, and Stover took charge of the Neighborhood Guild in his place. From the outset of his residence there he set out to learn the resources as well as the needs of the neighborhood. In this he received enormous assistance from Edward King, a Scotch printer and Trade Unionist, deeply imbued with the philosophy of August Comte, who came to be the "guide, philosopher and friend" of a whole generation of youthful Russian Jewish immigrants who were growing up on the East Side. He and King lived at the Guild house, No. 147 Forsyth Street, a small three-storied dwelling, now swept away in the so-called Chrystie Street Improvement. The house echoed by day and until late in the evening with the high voices and scuffling footsteps of the children of the neighborhood, who gathered there in clubs for play and instructional purposes.

In the Johns Hopkins article (entitled "The Neighborhood Guild in New York") to which reference has been made above, Stover tells us the

origin and purposes of the institution with which he had decided to cast in his lot. It began with a boys' club, to which was added, as volunteer workers became available, a club for young women, one for little boys, and one for little girls. Together these clubs formed the Guild, which adopted as its motto "Order is our Basis; Improvement our Aim; and Friendship our Principle." Very soon a kindergarten was added. It was hoped to have one of these guilds in every election district of the city. While taking advantage of the social instinct which was universally prevalent, these clubs were designed, in Stover's words, "to encourage thrift and fellow-helpfulness, to purify and exalt the tastes, to excite opposition to all forms of injustice, and to kindle devotion to the common weal."

The forms of entertainment and education provided were those already employed at Toynbee Hall and are too well-known today to require description. It is noteworthy that Stover strongly approves of the "Dancing Evening" as one of them, defending it against the puritanical objections of the day. He praises the principle of enlarged intercourse between those living up-town and down, and already accentuates the university connections of the first residents at the Guild, thus suggesting its later development into a university or college settlement as an alternative to Coit's original conception of grouping the forces of regeneration about the family as a unit. As reasons for his support of this view he instances the presence in the commu-

nity of a large class of educated young men deeply interested in social problems who are yet unable to work in ecclesiastical leading-strings, while its attraction to workingmen, so largely alienated from the churches, should be very great. Sanitary, social and political reforms might also be expected to emanate more readily from an institution modeled on the lines of Toynbee Hall. In conclusion he defends the University-bred mind from the charge that it is unsuited to instruct and inspire the masses, citing the ability of these to understand the political addresses of leading lawyers and statesmen.

It was while living here that Stover, with the help of an army of small-boy assistants, collected the signatures for the monster petition that was to result in the opening to the public of the Metropolitan Museum of Art on Sunday afternoons. No mention of his labors is made in the newspaper accounts of the opening day (June 1, 1891) and that is in itself a tribute to the modesty and self-effacement of all his work. Another quality, equally characteristic of all he did—namely, thoroughness—is illustrated by the fact that we find him at work the following spring (April, 1892) soliciting the support of all the metropolitan papers for a bill before the Legislature providing for public financing of the Sunday opening policy. The Museum trustees had assumed the expense for the first year, but asked a permanent appropriation for the future. Stover went to Albany to inquire about its prospects and as a result made his appeal to the press.

Through King he met the leaders of the Central Labor Union and learned the enormous value of the co-operation of organized labor in forwarding his plans of public improvement and social welfare. As these plans developed in his mind he felt the need of greater independence and freedom from hampering restraints in order to devote himself to the type of work he had come to recognize as his own and withdrew from the Guild altogether, settling in small and dark quarters across the street, No. 146 Forsyth Street, where Coit had lived when he first took up an East Side residence. King and others joined him later in the same house and here was the nucleus of another "settlement," free of official up-town connections.

Of his physical surroundings at 146 Forsyth Street, where he lived until his removal to the new building of the University Settlement in 1908, it is necessary to say something in order that the difficulties in the way of his accomplishment may be understood. The back room, where he slept, was entirely dark and littered with stacks of newspaper (later augmented by a similar collection belonging to King) which he kept for the purpose of documenting the work upon which he was engaged. The narrow front room, which served as his "office" and contained his roller-top desk, was at the left of the flight of steps leading up from the sidewalk. With the crowds scuffling past his door, the frequent intrusions upon his privacy, the racket of the street at his window, the stench of over-

crowded humanity that was borne on the fetid air, the lack of space in which to move about, he was often forced to seek a refuge elsewhere—the Public Library, for instance—if he were to do any calm and collected work.

Henry Moskowitz, a friend of those days, recalls that it was his first task each morning to go out and buy all the morning newspapers, because he did not consider a public event understood until viewed in the reflection of the various angles of opinion. This was necessary also in the case of those matters in which he was taking an active hand, in order to know where an ally in the cause might be discovered and where a foe lay concealed. His meals mattered little; they could wait until more important matters had been disposed of. Very often it was not until late at night that he and King met at Facompré's, the little bakery on Rivington Street, or at Armbruster's on Second Avenue, and even then it was as much for the purpose of discussion as for food. Abstemious by habit especially where meat was concerned, there is little doubt that Stover injured his health by the irregularities of his diet, and more especially by the lack of any regular hours for taking his meals.

III.

ONE of his earliest campaigns—unless I am mistaken, it occurred in the spring and summer of 1892—was that to keep a group of racing men and owners of fast horses from constructing a speedway in Central Park. Stover was, of course, not alone in this, there having always existed a large body of sentiment opposed to all encroachment upon the Park, but he threw himself into the opposition with characteristic vigor, nor did he neglect the interests of the horse-owners, but co-operated in the task of finding them a site for their activities that would not interfere with the recreation of the populace. When in 1909 another attempt to invade the Park was made—this time on the part of the National Academy of Design, which wished to erect its new building there—Stover, although easily enthused in behalf of Art, was equally determined in his opposition, and as chairman of the legislation committee of the Outdoor Recreation League, issued a pamphlet in which were collected all the newspaper opinions adverse to the plan and calling for the defeat of the bills that had been introduced to provide for its authorization.

In the early days of his residence at No. 146

the organization that formed a background for Stover's dynamic activities was the Chadwick Civic Club. The conditions of the enterprise demanded an organization, since it was repugnant both to his modesty and to necessary public support to let it become known that he was essentially a lone voice crying in the wilderness. Later this function was undertaken in turn by the Social Reform Club, the Outdoor Recreation League and the East Side Civic Club. The Chadwick Civic Club, named by King for the English sanitary and civic reformer Edwin Chadwick, consisted of a very small group indeed, including, besides Stover and King, John McG. Goodale, who had succeeded Stover as head of the Neighborhood Guild, Julius H. Cohen, an able young lawyer (not to be confused with his namesake who became prominent in up-town civic movements), his brother Samuel Cohen, a few of the older members of the Guild clubs, and the writer of this memoir. This group, when its name appeared on manifestoes in favor of the municipal ownership of the new subway or for or against some measure pending in the Legislature, seldom failed to provoke marked mystification in the minds of city editors, local reporters, and the breasts of legislators. And well it might, both because of the anonymous character of its members, none of whom was well-known at the time, and because it never acquired even the dignity of a habitation, holding its meetings for the most part in Stover's rooms. But it played its part, particularly in the

long-drawn-out campaign for municipal ownership into which Stover poured the full torrent of his energies, besides expending almost in its entirety the last of his money, an inheritance from his parents and grandmother. Municipal ownership, in that day of perpetual franchises to private companies, was practically unknown in this country, and the fact that the City today owns and operates the first of its subways is due, I think beyond question, to the practical idealism of this solitary citizen. And let it not be supposed that great qualities of tact, as well as knowledge and back-bone, were not necessary to secure it. The authority in charge of the subway's construction, the Rapid Transit Commission, was opposed and the mass of the citizens and legislators indifferent, and when, to get on with the job, they accepted his solution, there was none to do honor to his achievement. It was Stover's insistence upon the inclusion of a referendum amendment in their bill that made municipal ownership possible, and so loud was the clamor of the Chadwick Civic Club, backed by the labor unions, that the Legislature dared not pass the bill without the amendment. As early as the beginning of the legislative session of 1893 Stover was in Albany with a bill to authorize city ownership and operation of the new subway, but the elevated railway traction interests had no difficulty in defeating it. At the following session he was there again and during that winter he spent his money freely journeying to and fro between the capital

and New York, as well as in every other way that could contribute legitimately to the advancement of his cause. Captain W. C. Clarke, an observer on the spot, wrote to the *World* many years later, that he was offered everything the heart could desire to desist in his efforts, but it is possible that a traction monopoly was not the best judge of what a heart like Stover's might desire. At any rate he stuck to his task, exhausting his money, income and principal, in the process, and saw his "compromise", in the shape of the referendum amendment, accepted in the end. It is said that a well-known philanthropist offered a subscription of \$5,000 to his campaign, provided he would drop the municipal operation feature from his program, but this he was unwilling to do until forced thereto by the exigencies of the situation.

Before this he had argued the advantages of underground over elevated rapid transit, and later this was to become the object of another of his major campaigns—that to keep the elevated tracks out of Delancey and neighboring streets. The inhabitants of Brooklyn, if they were wise, he argued, would favor the underground system since it would lead to tunnels, which were cheaper and safer than bridges. The aesthetic and sanitary objections to the overhead tracks, keeping sunlight and air from the streets and disfiguring them, also appealed to him greatly.

About this time—to be exact on November 22nd, 1894—the Social Reform Club came into

being in response to a suggestion of Dr. Felix Adler's that an organization was needed, to be composed equally of labor men and representatives of all other social classes, to study the causes of strikes at that time widely prevalent throughout the country, and to inform the public on which side their sympathies ought to be. It did not quite work out that way, but drew to itself from the start most of the prominent reformers, men and women, of the day. Naturally, being reformers, their sympathies were with labor, and it became quickly evident that in the eyes of the Social Reform Club nearly every strike was a good one. Unlike the Chadwick Civic Club, its membership was, as has been intimated, a very distinguished one, the roster of whose names would include almost all those prominent in "social service work," as it was then beginning to be called, besides some well-known professional people, including some of the clergy, and many of the local labor leaders. But among them was not one who was willing to assume the duties of its presidency until one day was recorded in the newspapers the arrival from Europe of Ernest Howard Crosby, who, inspired by the writings of Tolstoy, was resigning his post as a member of the International Tribunal in Egypt, to devote himself to the study of social questions in his native land. At once Stover spotted him as our man and suggested to the writer that we call upon him. We did so, found him enthusiastic for this, as for every other service, and the

first president of the Social Reform Club was obtained.

This is not the place to undertake a history of the Social Reform Club, but for a number of years it flourished exceedingly, although not in the direction intended by its founder, its activities taking the form of weekly discussions at which people of national reputation and not a few from foreign countries debated the question of the day, and of special committees appointed to secure action in some of the more manageable of these questions. One of them, in which Stover played the leading part (1897) was the matter of seamen's rights, which was brought to dramatic issue by the arrival in port of an American sailing-vessel, the *T. F. Oakes*, with all the crew sick of the scurvy. Had the vessel been provisioned as required by law this would have been impossible, and Stover's committee worked in cooperation with the American Seamen's Union in two suits, one civil, the other criminal, to obtain justice for the men. It was necessary to keep the members of the crew available as witnesses throughout the long delay before the case could be reached in court, and to this end they were boarded in the country, where he visited them at regular intervals, taking them instalments of their wages, and helping to keep them contented by playing baseball with them and organizing entertainment. The civil suit was won and they were accorded \$3,000 in damages but the criminal suit against the captain of the vessel went against

them because of a provision in the law requiring the proof of "malice, hatred or revenge" as part of his motive in withholding the necessary supplies. Obviously the law required amendment, and this was eventually secured through the passage in Congress of the Seamen's Rights Bill, which immeasurably improved the position of sailors in the American merchant marine, being described by Stover as "the Emancipation Proclamation of American Seamen." To the preparation of this bill and its subsequent adoption by Congress went an enormous amount of hard work, and it is safe to say that it affords the sole instance in the history of the Social Reform Club in which a committee of the Club found itself in opposition to a powerful labor union and carried its pretensions to a successful conclusion. This situation came about through the insistence of the union upon its own bill, a still more radical measure, which had no chance of enactment. To secure favorable consideration by Congress it was necessary to unite behind the measure to be presented the support of the four leading religious societies concerned with sailors' interests, the Maritime Society of Sea Captains, and the Maritime Association of Shipowners. Point by point the provisions of the bill were discussed with representatives of these institutions with the result of extracting from them enormous concessions in the direction of the union contentions. The bill as finally passed provided for a mandatory scale of provisions except in the amount of water; abolished

corporal punishment for any cause; forbade allotments in the coasting trade; exacted a survey in domestic ports on demand of the sailors; abolished imprisonment for failure to render self on board in the port of shipment, and for desertion in home ports when his effects and wages amount to more than twenty-five dollars. These were all provisions incorporated in the Union's bill, consent to which had been obtained from the "interests" by Stover and his committee. The bill differed from that demanded by the seamen's representatives in making the captain, and not the ship, liable if a brutal under-officer is not surrendered; in permitting an allotment of one month's wages for deep-sea voyages; and in allowing imprisonment in home ports for one month at the discretion of the court if the seaman's effects and wages amount to less than twenty-five dollars. It seemed to Stover and to the Club that the new rights obtained so greatly outnumbered the defects left standing in the law as to constitute a logical "next step" in the struggle for sailor's rights and he censured the Union for its attitude of all or nothing.

Another leading committee of the Social Reform Club on which Stover served was that appointed to secure more parks and playgrounds for the people, but as this developed later into the Outdoor Recreation League, and as the subject itself became in time his major activity, comment may be deferred for the moment.

It must not be supposed that these committees

exhaust the list upon which he served. It would, on the contrary, be fairer to say that there was scarcely one important committee in whose work he did not, at one time or another, take part.

In the meanwhile he had been appointed in April, 1892, a member of the Board of School Trustees for the Tenth Ward. In those days the power of appointment of teachers to the public schools in the district was vested in these local boards, and this brought a procession of new visitors, applicants for positions, to his little "office" on Forsyth Street, to say nothing of the visits it involved to the schools themselves. Some of his fellow-members on this board were old Tammany politicians well-versed in pulling political wires, and with them he had to get along as best he could—which was, so far as personal relations went, very well. He resigned in July, 1895.

To these days, too, belongs the story of Frank Damrosch's Singing Classes, in which for some time he played a leading part. The classes were Mr. Damrosch's own idea, based upon his belief that 90% of men and 95% of women could be taught to read music and sing at sight, but he hesitated about the best means of putting his idea into execution and came to Stover, among others, for advice. Should these lessons be free, and the scheme financed by some of his wealthy friends, or should they be paid for by the people themselves? A mass-meeting was held in Cooper Union and the latter course adopted by a unanimous vote of the pro-

spective pupils. The credit for this, outside of that due to the popular instinct itself, belongs to King rather than to Stover, as he was the better versed in the arts of popular assemblage. But in the arduous work of organization devolving upon the secretary, to which position King had been appointed, it was Stover who did the lion's share of work. Circulars, letters and correspondence of all kinds piled up again in the little office as in the days of the municipal ownership campaign or the still earlier one, across the street, of the drive to open the Art Museum on Sunday afternoons. Later the Singing Classes under their own elected management developed into a shining example of democratic method adapted to an aesthetic end.

Still another social experiment, considered a bold one in those days, in which he took keen delight, was the free Art Exhibition in a loft rented for the purpose at Grand and Allen Streets. The canvasses were obtained on loan from wealthy private collectors, chiefly on the initiation of the late A. C. Bernheim, and the visitors were provided with a ballot on which to express their preferences. The favorite picture proved to be a landscape, the Apple Orchard, by Daubigny, although it was observed that as a rule it was the children, rather than their parents, who were attracted by landscape.

For two winters of his stay on Forsyth Street he tried letting a "bum" come to his room in the daytime to keep warm. The man came three times a week, and remained as much of a "bum" as ever—

or such was Stover's report of the experiment. This was a caller who came at his invitation and perhaps did not interrupt him much, but there were others under whose unwarranted intrusions he chafed severely, yet was too kind-hearted to dismiss them brusquely. "It took very plain language to get rid of the last caller," he wrote once in a letter to Miss Greene, but this was not his characteristic attitude. Much valuable time was lost him in entertaining the unwelcome, some of whom, no doubt, might have been welcome under other circumstances, and this problem of callers—he was practically at their mercy—became a difficult one, sometimes only to be solved by letting them knock in vain. In his periods of great mental depression when he wrestled for his lost faith and felt that until some assurance of divine guidance should reach him, it was impossible to continue in his work, was this especially the case. At one such time Mrs. Charles Russell Lowell, the very personification of the enlightened philanthropy of her day, came and knocked patiently at his door, while he within, knowing who it was that knocked, still declined to open. Letters, too, at such times, remained unanswered, no matter from whom they came. Until the inner problem was resolved, at least temporarily, he could bring himself to face no other—not even when his inactivity threatened the success of an entire campaign, the threads of which were centered in his hands.

IV.

WE HAVE been anticipating to some extent in order to group some of his early activities in Forsyth Street. But in the autumn of 1894, he left New York, with the intention of never returning there. No doubt he was tired, not physically, but mentally, with all the harassments he had undergone, but the principal reason was his growing lack of faith in Divine goodness or justice, or even in the worthiness of mankind to be helped. And to this was added the seeming impossibility of continuing his work without any adequate means of support. Again he turned his foot-steps towards Europe, as he had done once before after coming to Forsyth Street to live, in the summer of 1890. But then he went for the purpose of studying municipal problems abroad with the intention of applying what he should learn to conditions at home, while now he was filled with disappointment and disillusion, almost despair. From the earlier journey, which included Scandinavia, Russia, Austria and Italy, as well as London, he wrote letters to Henry J. Rode, secretary of the older young men's club at the Guild, for the purpose of keeping the boys informed of his travels. The correspondence from his later journey is concerned

mainly with the problems of his mental state. If he wrote of these things it must have been out of a feeling of obligation due to friendship, for it need hardly be stated that he was not one to wear his heart upon his sleeve.

By now his pessimism had grown so deep that he held the greatest crime of which a man could be guilty was that of perpetuating his own species. Birth, he held, was a monstrous injustice inflicted upon us without the possibility of an option concerning our willingness to accept the responsibilities of life, while later religion and man-made laws refuse us the right to reject it. This right he defends except in the case of those who have brought children into the world, who have thereby forfeited their right to withdraw. No amount of good an individual can do outweighs the evil of inflicting existence upon others.

Coming to a discussion of his own case, he tells us that his reason for having taken up his work on the East Side after having lost his faith was that saying of Jesus: "If any man will *do* my will, he shall know of the doctrine," but his faith had not been restored and he had seen his plans come to naught. "The failure of one's noblest plans—that is indeed sorrow's crown of sorrow." So he has reached the conviction that he is not qualified for the work he had undertaken, and that the cause he had espoused was not destined to succeed. In saying this he defends himself against the charge of fatalism and claims to be supported in his belief

solely by the facts, but cannot restrain himself from adding that since he was not himself responsible for the doubts that destroyed his faith, it must have been the will of Providence that brought about his failure.

Now he has given all he had to the poor, and is himself confronted with poverty, so that a return to his old manner of working is an impossibility. Should he therefore devote himself to some form of money-getting? Not only is it contrary to all his instincts and ideals, but it offers little possibility of providing even a bare living, let alone of affording means for the furtherance of those principles which, for him, alone gave a meaning to life.

The alternative to this is self-destruction—a right he had defended in this very letter and which, on his own confession, he had come near to putting into execution on more than one occasion before this. Now he plans to have it take place in the high Alps, whither he has already betaken himself, and where his body will remain inviolate at the hands of that society which cares so little how men are driven to destruction.

Such, however, was not to be his destiny. In the presence of the fatal act, the life instinct asserted itself, strong and unconquerable, in his vigorous, manly nature. And, in addition to that, may not those lines from Matthew Arnold's "Rugby Chapel" have re-awakened in his brain:

But thou wouldst not *alone*
Be saved, my father! *Alone*
Conquer and come to thy goal,
Leaving the rest in the wild—

lines which, he tells Miss Greene in a letter written several years later, "have gone with me on many a journey. They have inspired and strengthened me as has no other poem I know."

Slowly the way brightened before him, and by August 24th, back in London, he is able to write that he has "come up out of the depths." Since the "sudden and powerful revolt" which tore him away from the brink of the precipice, there had been others—a notable one in May which occurred while he was in Rome, at the close of the day, and before midnight he was in the train for London and America. But the impetus failed to endure, as did others generated by the reading of a newspaper, attendance at a political meeting, or even a walk taken in a great city, which caused, he writes, "a rush of angel-wings, which stirred the waters, and thrilled me with an impulse to get back to New York and engage in the battle for the right."

But even now, although resolved upon a return to his native land, he cannot see his way to resuming his work in the city. To a friend, E. W. Ordway, at that time in London, who urged it upon him as a duty to the people, and recommended that he take up teaching and writing to provide a means for his material support, he makes objection (in a letter to myself): "Both, for me, sure

avenues to starvation; or certain at least to so engross my time that the work I love best would have to be suspended, or, if not totally suspended, what means would teaching or writing yield me for the continuance of that work? It has been my habit for years to pay both my private and public bills from my own means. How many writers or teachers could have pursued my course of action during the two years of rapid transit agitation? My public and private expenditures were not kept separate. Therefore I cannot say how much I expended upon rapid transit. But this I do know that during those two years I spent \$6,000 of my own money. From what source in New York could I get even \$600 to do the same work over again? If the wealthy philanthropists of that city have shown no alacrity to aid the undertakings I engaged in heretofore, will they stretch out full hands to the struggling teacher or writer? Perhaps, if he runs a kindergarten or writes sonnets to my lady bountiful. But it is mighty certain that my latest experiences of life will not adulterate my beliefs and acts to a milk-and-water consistency pleasing to wealthy patrons of philanthropy. No! I am still in the dark as to the way I must adopt of making a living. Of this much I feel certain, that this *insurmountable* obstacle—here it cannot be said that it only remains for me to exercise the power of will to extricate myself—this *insurmountable* obstacle forbids my return to New York.” He concludes by insisting upon the acceptance of

his resignation from the local school board (it had been "laid upon the table" by his fellow-trustees) and by the announcement of his sailing (on August 28th) by a slow steamer to a neighboring port, from which he would go to his uncle's home at Milford.

Here the necessity of straightening out his affairs forced him to remain for several months, during which he learned to ride a bicycle, which he discovers to be not only "a wonderful poetic agency," but also a reforming machine—"more so than any of us have yet fancied." Which of these qualities in the machine it was that almost persuaded him to make use of it in a trip to the west he does not say, but on a steamer to Baltimore he met a veteran cyclist who told him that weather conditions (it was by this time the middle of November) by any but the extreme southerly route would make the trip impossible, and he decided to abandon it. Instead he resolved upon a visit to the Atlanta Exhibition, but this he accomplished by steamer and rail, not on his wheel. Several letters from Atlanta testify to his interest in the exhibition itself, the social conditions he was able to observe, among which he remarks upon the absence of cheap newspapers, and especially in the evidence of Negro progress shown in the educational exhibit, about which he finds himself in agreement with Booker Washington, who criticized the stress laid upon literary and artistic work in preference to the progress attained in the more practical affairs of

life. In addition he is indignant at the reported decision of the states of New York and Pennsylvania to donate their buildings, paid for out of public appropriations, to the rich Piedmont Club, an association of horsemen and drivers, instead of to the people of Atlanta. In one of these letters he refers to the "special quest" that had taken him to Atlanta, but fails to mention what it was.

During all this time and for some months after his return from the south, he had been awaiting the receipt of some money (there was a lost document involved in the transaction) which would render his return to New York practicable. This was received some time in the spring of 1896, and he returned in March of that year to his old quarters in Forsyth Street, to plunge, a few months later, into the Bryan presidential campaign.

This and the Henry George contest for the mayoralty in the following year were to constitute his two principal excursions into the field of political campaigning.

Towards the various "Good Government" and independent citizens' movements to free the City Hall from the grip of Tammany he had remained rather cool, not of course out of sympathy for corruption, but out of doubt concerning the efficacy of the means employed and because of his suspicion of a like corruption on the part of the reformers in their private affairs. If the public officials could be bribed, what about those that bribed them? While the methods in vogue in High Finance under the

cover of complete respectability differed from those of the grafting politicians only in the greater boldness and magnitude of their operations. Under such circumstances, the slogan "Put a business man in office" guaranteed nothing. It all depended on the business man, and even if he were not one of those defiled by the corrupt practices of some of his class, there was still the question of his competence to deal with the wiles of those likely to surround him in and out of office. Add to this that Stover was no believer in any claim to a monopoly of virtue put forth in behalf of a particular party. He demanded more than mere honesty in office as a party platform, and in constructive ideas those early reform movements were apt to be deficient.

On the other hand, whatever he might think of its ideas, he had no very profound faith in the Socialist organization of his day, which by the inflexibility of its rules and the narrow dogmatism of its tenets seemed to seek the exclusion rather than the admission of new adherents to its ranks. Composed almost wholly of foreigners and led by doctrinaires, it had little to offer as an instrument for the kind of immediate betterment in which he was interested.

But the methods involved in "campaigning" for an individual candidate differ, after all, very slightly from those he had learned in his prosecution of the cause of municipal ownership and in other matters. In both it is "agitation," designed to culminate in "education" that counts, and given

a man in whom he could believe, Stover was ready to employ in his behalf all the methods at his command. Only here again he did not join a party, but organized a group called the "Independent Bryan League." In a letter to Henry J. Rode, dated September 19, he says its membership then numbered 517, the increase in the past week being 202, and attributes the insertion of employers' liability and anti-conspiracy planks in the Democratic state platform directly to the League's exertions. The League was organized up-state as well as in the city, and King traveled extensively making speeches in its name. Stover resorted unwillingly to speech-making. As an orator he never failed to impress by his earnestness, but his utterance seemed at moments clogged by the force of his conviction. His principal defects, however, arose from his habit of digression, the thoughts crowding upon him so fast that he was incapable of refusing to each its immediate development. This led, of course, into many a side path from which he would with difficulty return to the main issue.

V.

THE best outline of the children's playground movement in New York, of which for many years Stover was the soul, is contained in an article written by himself in 1927, entitled "A Playground Narrative." It will bear quotation in full, with the exception of its closing paragraphs, which are concerned with some strictly contemporary matters of relatively small importance.

It is the purpose of this short narrative, he begins, to sketch the reaction of a childhood spent in or near the country, upon after years of city life. But while this is a story of playgrounds only, I hasten to add, as many a time I insisted during my Park Commissionership, that I utterly disclaim being a man of one idea.

When I began my residence on the East Side, 30 years ago, at once the fact forced itself on my attention that its children possessed fewer recreation privileges than I had known in the Pennsylvania town from which I came.

Throughout my earliest years, I had enjoyed, under ideal conditions, the pleasure of fishing, boating, swimming, skating, picnicking and camping, on and along the picturesque Delaware.

It was my privilege to grow up at the renowned Forks of the Delaware, where two other streams, the placid Lehigh and the gurgling Bushkill, have their mouths, all three of them flowing through lands rich in Indian legend and Revolutionary story.

The changing seasons were annually marked by events such as the East Side child only reads about. Year after year we made pilgrimages to the nearby foothills of the Blue Ridge to gather the wood anemone, the crocus, and the trailing arbutus, and later for the royal mountain laurel which lends such distinction to the mountains of Pennsylvania. And in the Fall, without fear of molestation, we wandered in hillside forests to gather unlimited quantities of chestnuts, walnuts, butter and hickory nuts. Though the above is but a partial picture, it may suffice to bring out the barren conditions of East Side childhood, as I saw them 30 years ago.

In 1887, when I succeeded Dr. Stanton Coit (the founder of the first Settlement in America), as president and director of the Neighborhood Guild (the original title of the University Settlement), there was not a park or playground in all the lower East Side, south of Tompkins Square. Seward, Hamilton Fish, Corlears Hook, and Rutgers Parks had not yet been established. The public authorities had not yet been converted to the playground idea, which now everyone espouses.

In that day even the Board of Education

gave it the cold shoulder, turning down as an expensive fad the proposition of a roof-playground which I, as school trustee of the Tenth ward, put forward for the new Public School No. 7, at Hester and Chrystie Streets, in 1891. But now school roof-playgrounds are so numerous that all must regard them as essential in school construction.

From my earliest days on the East Side, I felt that in tenement roofs lie undeveloped opportunities for play, though I have always seen, and still see the difficulties of their development and management. This lesson I learned in 1888, when I took voluntary charge of the four model tenements in Cherry Street between Montgomery and Clinton Streets, where at the time also the Neighborhood Guild established its first branch. There we had a brick roof-playground—probably the first in our City. It required but little experience, however, to show the superiority of play space on the earth level.

In 1890 I participated in the formation of the first Society for Parks and Playgrounds in New York, ex-Mayor Abram S. Hewitt agreeing, at my solicitation, to act as its first president. This organization did some excellent pioneer work.

Later, in 1898, I participated also in the formation of the Outdoor Recreation League, to which body history must ever accord the honor of having successfully established, against dense ignorance and prejudice, in public

and private quarters, the right of the New York child to possess and enjoy public playgrounds, even in the parks, if need be.

As a result of the five years of intense activity by this League and its collection and expenditure of \$25,000 in private contributions from enlightened citizens, for the establishment and maintenance of playgrounds, outdoor gymnasiums and athletic fields, both on public and private property, as on the Stryker Estate (since become DeWitt Clinton Park) ; on East 35th Street (since become St. Gabriel's Park) ; on West 68th Street; on the blocks acquired for Seward Park (but not yet so laid out) ; and in Hamilton Fish Park and Tompkins Square; I say, as a result of the work done and the lesson taught, by the Outdoor Recreation League, the municipality finally in 1903 became fully converted to the playground idea. And, whereas, in those days, in the name of the League, one had to fight incessantly for playgrounds in our parks, no park commissioner since 1903 has failed in friendly support of playgrounds, either in, or apart from the parks.

Appointed Park Commissioner by Mayor Gaynor, it was one of my chief delights to increase the number of playgrounds. And here I would record a fact, too little known, I believe, that opportunities were found to establish new playgrounds *without financial appropriation*. For instance, the City owned the entire block front on Amsterdam Avenue, be-

tween 151st Street and 152nd Street acquired originally for Croton Aqueduct purposes. There I found squatters in ramshackle dwellings. Why should they remain, and children and older people be excluded? We put out the squatters and turned the site into Carmansville's Playground, one of the prettiest and most successful in the city.

Again, a large plot of ground on Avenue A, between 59th and 60th Streets, had been acquired for the Queensborough Bridge approach. In a simple and inexpensive manner, we overcame the steep slope of 26 feet in 200, and there is the Queensborough Bridge Playground, with permanent concrete seats for 1500 people.

Again, acres and acres of park land lay buried beneath the Hudson River, in front of Riverside Park. The City was then paying millions for the boring of the Catskill Aqueduct through the rocky depths of Manhattan Island. That excavated rock the contractors were either selling or wasting. I saw and reasoned with them, and got enough rock from this source, to make more than 10 acres of solid land on Riverside Drive water front. Such operations are believed to be so attractive to itching palms, that one cynical slanderer could not refrain from saying \$600,000 came to me. But in truth what greater satisfaction could there be than creating, without expense to the City, those expensive ball-grounds in the Hudson—solid foundations moreover for

the great Riverside Drive waterfront improvement, yet to be consummated.

This list of playground sites, secured *without financial appropriation*, need not be enlarged here. I ask leave to dig up this much of the past, in order to induce similar action in the present.

After this general review of playground development, as it began in the mind of one man and was gradually enlarged until it became a recognized function of the municipal government, it may be interesting to revert for a moment to the days of the Outdoor Recreation League, of which he was at different times secretary, president, or "minister without portfolio"; and, thanks to the preservation of the League's Minutes and to a series of letters written by him to Miss Helen Greene during the construction of the first permanent public outdoor playground in New York, this is fortunately possible.

Already in the Minutes of a meeting held on April 13, 1898, before the League had completed its organization and decided upon a name, we find Stover, as chairman of a committee on Lower East Side playgrounds, reporting in favor of a leveling of the ground and expenditures for playground purposes in the Willett Street (later called Hamilton Fish) and Hester Street (afterwards William H. Seward) Parks. At the following meeting on May 6th, he asks the League to raise \$1,000 for the purposes of equipping these parks with gym-

nastic apparatus and instructors, and at the same meeting he reports that an upper West Side playground had been secured, which he likewise invited the League to equip. This was the Stryker Estate, a large plot of ground lying west of Eleventh Avenue between 52nd and 53rd Streets, which was shortly after leased by the League and fenced in for the use of the youth of the neighborhood as an outdoor playground, running track, and gymnasium. Known to Stover and the League as "Hudsonbank," it was re-christened DeWitt Clinton Park when finally taken over by the City. In the meantime he continued his effort for a transfer of funds within the Park Department to permit of the erection of a gymnasium in Seward Park, and, this failing, the League voted \$500. for the purpose at its meeting of June 30th, permission being obtained from the Park Department in the following month. At the meeting of September 8th he reports the ground about ready for occupancy, but by October 6th the space allotted to the League has not yet been fenced in, nor the ground yet leveled according to the specifications of the contract.

Up to this point it has been convenient to consider the development of these two playgrounds, Hudsonbank and Seward Park side by side, as each has put forward its claim to be the oldest outdoor playground in the city. It is evident that this honor belongs to Hudsonbank which was opened with athletic games, speeches, and considerable ceremony on August 27th, 1898, the occasion having been

deferred a week so as not to conflict with the welcome accorded the victorious fleet upon its return from Cuba on the previous Saturday. But it may still be claimed for Seward Park that it was the first *public* park to set aside a space equipped with apparatus for physical education, and this was especially coveted by Stover for the under-developed youth of the lower East Side.

In his correspondence with Miss Greene, we are able to follow the care for every detail which was characteristic of the kind of supervision he gave to every task he undertook. The settlement of which she was Head Worker was in the immediate neighborhood of Hudsonbank, and she was often called upon to act as his representative when duties downtown prevented him from visiting the grounds himself.

Here we find unrolled in letter after letter the difficulties with landlords, agents, politicians, caretakers, gymnastic instructors, carpenters, tradesmen, the young toughs of the neighborhood, and the proprietors of a "razzle-dazzle" on adjoining property, which resorted to illegitimate methods of competition with the new playground. The first problem was how to acquire a proper title to the ground, after which questions arose concerning the introduction of water and light. It was not at first intended to keep the playground open in the evening, but this proved necessary to drive the iniquitous "razzle-dazzle" (which charged admission and fostered immorality) from the field. The interven-

ing space between the playground, which was on fairly high ground, and the waterside was filled with old barrels which had once held sugar or Puerto Rico rum, completely obscuring a view of the river. These had to be removed, and when permission had been secured, the small boys of the neighborhood organized a campaign to roll them down the slope, dubbing them "Spaniards" to add zest to the sport.

The framework of the gymnastic structure was of 3-inch iron pipe, 75 feet long, 20 broad, and 16 in height, to which was attached 35 gymnastic articles obtained from the manufacturer at a cost of \$500—a reduction of \$250 from the catalog price, which Stover ascribes to "our intimate connection with certain influential persons in the athletic world, to the character of our organization, and to the fact that we are putting up the *first* outdoor gymnasium in this city." There were miniature swings on which the children marveled that they could ride free of charge, since those of the adjoining "razzle-dazzle" could be used only for pay. The Board of Education contributed a tent and supplied the service of two Kindergartners. Here is his own account of the playground for little children. "In front of the sand-garden, which measures 40 x 14 feet and is beautifully shaded by the trees—I have had erected two rows of double benches 16 feet long and two rows of solid beams 16 feet long to support three or four see-saws apiece. These benches and see-saw structures are

directly attached at regular intervals to the front of the sand-garden and extend forward at right angles to the same. The benches and see-saws are placed alternately. You can imagine the scene. Two hundred children are playing on an inland seashore—a most wonderful seashore, for directly out of its sands a variety of trees are growing. In front are rows of mothers with babies watching the older children rise and fall on the see-saws at their very feet.” And over this space, beyond the shaded sands, he has planned an awning to be painted in bright colors, such as he remembers to have seen on the sails of Venetian boats. To Miss Greene’s suggestion that blocks of wood be placed in the sand for the children to play with he makes objection that “Blocks of wood are coveted on the ground as blocks of gold. Every piece of wood that falls from the carpenter’s saw is seized before it reaches the ground.” While defending the people from a charge of stealing, he says they would not understand why they should not take away blocks of wood that cumber the ground. Instead he promises clam and other shells.

As the plan develops a watchful eye is kept open for improvements. Already before the official opening he has considered the question of providing some special recreation for the girls, and has ordered croquet grounds set out, while later, after a shelter for storage and dressing purposes has been built, cooking-classes are provided. Kite flying and sack-races and bean-bags are encouraged and medals

provided for the periodic games. Special winter activities are devised and shovels supplied with which the boys may build fortifications in the snow. He approves the plan first adopted in Boston of providing the boys with free gymnasium suits, but I cannot discover whether it was actually carried out.

In the meanwhile some of the problems since familiar to all city playgrounds have developed. What to do with truant children? He is opposed to excluding them from the playground until he knows where they will go instead. Then the appropriation by the older boys, or even the "young tough" element, of the gymnastic apparatus for themselves. This could sometimes be prevented only by the police.

One of the letters concludes: "There is more to be said, but midnight is past and I must be at the running-track at 8:00 A.M. to put ten more men to work." Not only did he supervise the work himself and commonly act as paymaster, but it fell to him to provide practical solutions for the various difficulties arising from the uncertain ownership of the land, etc. For instance, when the owner (or lessee) demanded space for the access of his trucks from Stryker Lane, Stover provided it by getting the Metropolitan Street Railway Co. to instruct its drivers to dump their refuse in the foundations of a ruined building that was in the way, thus making a new roadway practicable without expense to the League.

Nor did he neglect to enlist the sympathy of its own particular neighborhood for any new park that might be proposed. At Hudsonbank the population was predominantly Catholic, and he was unwearied in his efforts to get one of the priests of the nearest parish church to undertake the part of chief orator at the opening exercises. When, for one reason or another, no one prominent in the neighborhood could be found, he was for omitting speeches altogether, but was finally persuaded to make the speech himself.

Work at Seward Park was suspended during the winter, but on April 6, 1899, he writes Miss Greene: "I have had a very satisfactory talk with Park Commissioner Claussen. He assents to the latest proposition that we occupy the largest of the three blocks constituting Hester Street Park—renews our permit, and I believe we shall begin work there next week." The arrangement was that the City should do nothing beyond the leveling and preparing of the ground and fencing it in, so that the playground when opened, as it was in the following June, was not only the creation of Stover and his friends (the Outdoor Recreation League), but was operated by them with funds secured by appeals to the public. One such appeal, issued in the late fall of 1899, and bearing the signatures of Miss Lillian D. Wald and J. G. Phelps Stokes, then treasurer of the League, in addition to his own, pleads for funds with which to keep the playground open during the winter, and is supple-

mented with a circular quoting experts' endorsements of winter play. Besides the gymnasium and two separate running-tracks, it cites the first-class basket-ball field for boys and men, and suggests curtain- and tether-ball as games providing for vigorous exercises for children and girls. This appeal is printed on the stationery of the League, and on it we find Stover listed as chairman of each of the three playgrounds at that time under its control: Hudsonbank, Seward Park and the Sixty-Eighth Street Playground, a small plot on the West side, the funds for which had been secured by Mrs. Miriam Sutro Price.

Throughout the following winter he is busy with the officials of the Park Department, trying to get them to install drainage and electric lights, as well as to make plans for the park as a completed whole. The question of truancy in the playground is the source of some anxiety in the Spring, and negotiations with the Board of Education to regulate this led to a new agreement respecting the work of the kindergartners there, by which they undertook to exercise some supervision over the games and apparatus in addition to their occupational work. A proposal to turn the entire work over to the Board of Education, made in the following September, was considered inadvisable at the time, and instead it was decided to start a petition, to be signed by business men and residents of the district inviting the retention of the gymnasium and playground in the plans to be adopted by the

City. The organization of this work was left to Stover.

The preparation of a new City Charter in the autumn of 1900 brought to the fore the question of a formal recognition of recreation therein, and the League, upon Stover's initiation, resolved to ask for the establishment of playgrounds in Seward, Hamilton Fish, Corlear's Hook and Mulberry Bend Parks, all to be under the control of the Park Department, hoping thereby to set a precedent in accordance with which playgrounds with gymnasiums might gradually find their way into all the parks.

When at length the Park Department made public its plans for the permanent improvement of Seward Park, they were found to be ludicrously insufficient and inadequate with respect to the provisions allowed for outdoor amusement and recreation, so that the League, at its meeting on January 4, 1901, found it necessary to adopt strong resolutions, which, after citing its operation of a playground there for a period of nearly two years and calling attention to the will of the neighborhood, clearly expressed in petitions that it should be continued, demanded that no permanent plan be approved which did not make ample provision for the recreational feature.

Although this protest appears to have had its effect in an interview accorded himself and Mrs. Lowell by the Park Commissioner, in the course of which the Commissioner promised to send in

supplementary estimates providing for the maintenance by the City of such additional playgrounds as might be designated by the two representatives of the League, who were invited to prepare such estimates, yet when a new set of plans for Seward Park (the third produced by the Department) were submitted they proved to be almost equally unsatisfactory. One difficulty lay in the fact that the Department, owing to the opposition of local politicians, had abandoned its efforts to have two streets—Norfolk and Hester—abutting upon the Park, closed. Here Stover stepped in, persuading the Park's representative to hold the plans up until he could interview some of the local leaders. Chief among these and a mighty man in his day was Martin Engel, Eighth District Leader. Him Stover approached with accustomed tact, and although at first opposed to the closing of the streets, he became, as we have it recorded in Stover's own handwriting in the League's minutes for the meeting of September 20, "the heartiest supporter of said ordinances, and of the park's improvement in general according to the Outdoor Recreation League's ideas." Although delays were to follow by reason of the absence of city officials during the summer, this notable conversion insured the closing of the streets, thus paving the way for a larger area of playground development.

The plans of the Park Department were now satisfactory, but funds for the improvement were still withheld by the City. Remedial action was,

however, taken before the end of the year, and at its meeting of January 16, 1902, the League voted to turn over to the Park Department its gymnastic apparatus and all other property at Seward Park and Hudsonbank, title to the latter having been taken by the City on the preceding May 13. Interest in the management and development of both parks after their acquisition by the City was maintained by Stover and his associates, as is shown by an item in the minutes more than four years later, when the Park Department was petitioned to keep the baths in Seward Park open in the evening.

Of the smaller playgrounds operated by the League during this period, that at 68th Street and Amsterdam Avenue has already been mentioned, while another ("Kip's Bay"), actively furthered by a local committee on which Mrs. Simkhovitch and the late William Potts were prominent, was established at 35th Street between First and Second Avenues, and later taken over by the City as St. Gabriel's Park. Another, with considerable assistance from the League, was operated by the Federation of Churches at 94th Street and Amsterdam. To all of these Stover lent valuable aid. Requests for information and advice regarding the organization and management of playgrounds came to the League from all parts of the country, and these were usually referred to him for reply.

This is perhaps the place to say that the Outdoor Recreation League remained in existence up to the time of Stover's appointment as Park Com-

missioner in 1910, rendering him faithful service in his later campaigns for the widening of Delancey Street and the acquisition by the City of a sea-shore tract at Rockaway. In December, 1905, he submitted to the Comptroller a list of available playground sites in Brooklyn and Manhattan. A year later it was proposed to formulate a plan looking to the creation of a separate bureau of playgrounds in the Park Department, but nothing seems to have come of this, and in October, 1907, we find him reporting that the Brooklyn Commissioner (Kennedy) was opposed to the appointment of a general Superintendent of Playgrounds for all the boroughs on the ground that he wanted people in the Department responsible to himself alone. Owing to Stover's vigilance at Albany, the preceding spring, a most important piece of legislation affecting playgrounds was saved from defeat at the last moment. After \$1,000,000 had been appropriated by the City for the acquisition of playgrounds (as distinguished from parks containing playgrounds), and title actually taken to several, it was discovered by the Corporation Counsel that the Charter contained no provision for their supervision, and a bill was hastily drafted placing them under the jurisdiction of the Park Commissioner. This bill in the closing hours of the legislative session had been mistaken for another measure and would have failed of passage but for Stover's intervention. Without the aid it provided, all the playgrounds already obtained, would have had to lie

idle, unimproved and unoccupied and subject to damage suits for neglect against the City.

One of the very first achievements of the League had been the opening of twenty school playgrounds for use outside of school hours, while an outdoor camp for boys was maintained in Pelham Bay Park. In 1904 a bill was introduced in the Legislature permitting the erection of "temporary" school buildings in the small parks, and Stover hastened to Albany again to oppose its passage. Besides pointing out that there were sites already owned by the City in addition to others that could be readily acquired, he stated his definite conviction that as between the occupation of these parks and the continuation of part-time classes, the former was the greater evil.

In a summing-up of the work of the Outdoor Recreation League contained in an article in "The Playground" (organ of the Playground Association of America), Nov. 17, 1908, the writer says: "And while many helped, yet it was Mr. Charles B. Stover who inspired the aggressive, effective policy of the League, a man who would be the last to take claim for himself for any credit whatever and the first to whom his co-workers would ascribe much."

VI.

VERY dear to Stover's heart was the project of an ocean park within reach of the city's toiling millions. In an "Address to the Public," dated May, 1904, he sets forth his plan, which had already been approved by a conference of civic and philanthropic bodies, including the East Side Civic Club and the Outdoor Recreation League, and outlines the argument in its favor. The site recommended is the western end of Rockaway Beach, which "consists, he tells them, of all the unimproved land lying west of Belle Harbor and bounded on the north by Jamaica Bay and on the west and south by the Atlantic Ocean. In length it is about four miles and in area about 850 acres, or the same size as Central Park."

He then continues:

Before proceeding to enumerate briefly the arguments in favor of this particular site, we would venture the assertion that no New Yorker can doubt the exceeding great value of such a park to the mass of the people, whose outings, in our burning summer weather, are only of a day's duration. For the larger part of our population, especially the young, the Jersey Coast resorts, which at first mention seem so near, are as distant and unapproachable as Newport and Bar Harbor.

It is true that New York, with its more than 300 miles of water front, has not been unmindful of the charm and importance of its shores for recreation purposes; in Riverside and Ft. Washington we have great river banks; in Dyker and Pelham we have great bay parks; and quite a chain of small parks runs around the shore of Manhattan; but, though having the Atlantic Ocean for its southern boundary our city has never recognized the exceptional importance of Ocean Parks.

We know that at the foot of Ocean Parkway, lies Seaside Park, about 30 acres in extent—truly only a drop in the bucket; that is, of our entire park area of 6,000 acres, we have devoted one-two-hundredth part to the joys of the ocean. Boston with only one sixth of our population possesses in Revere Beach an ocean park 3 miles in length. In recent years earnest efforts have been made to recover the ground lost at Coney Island. But the expensive improvements which line its shore, have become an inseparable barrier to municipal possession. To duplicate Revere Beach at Coney Island would cost millions. Those who have fought hardest for such a park at Coney Island have given up the fight.

While recognizing the desirability of the proposed parks on the south shore of Staten Island we must nevertheless emphasize the fact that, being washed by the protected waters of the lower bay this shore does not afford opportunities for surf bathing and other seaside

amusements comparable to those at Rockaway. Only one site is now available for an ocean park of adequate dimensions and we believe it should receive immediate attention lest it soon become the field of private speculation and like Coney Island be lost to the municipality forever. We recommend the acquisition of Rockaway Beach, as above defined, for the following reasons:

First. It is all unimproved and could, our investigations lead us to believe, be purchased at a reasonable price.

Second. It consists of but two parcels, in the hands of two owners, both of whom, we are inclined to think, could be induced to part with the land in the interest of the people.

Third. It embraces the best bathing beach within our city—far surpassing Coney Island in this respect. Further, its inner or Jamaica Bay shore would afford boundless opportunities for still-water bathing, boating, sailing and fishing.

Fourth. Lying as it does, between the ocean and Jamaica Bay, Rockaway is always tempered by the breezes, as Coney Island is not.

Fifth. Already our population is so vast as to point to the need of increased ocean bathing facilities more particularly for the multitudes who cannot afford to pay the prices prevailing at Coney Island and elsewhere, under private management.

Sixth. Were this land acquired now the people would not long be denied the privileges

of its full enjoyment. This end of Rockaway is at our very doors, and not on a neighboring continent, as some people unfamiliar with the geography of our ocean front mistakingly assume. Our study of the transportation problem herein involved and our conferences with the heads of the railway lines convince us that upon the acquisition and development of this land for park purposes, there would rapidly ensue railway bridge and ferry extensions whereby Rockaway would vie with Coney Island in time and cost of getting there. As a matter of fact, even today the difference in these respects is slight.

And in a thoughtful article published in *Charities* the following month, he says:

Determination, so essential in any undertaking, has played a leading part in the development of New York's park system. Whenever the advances have been marked, it has been in the face of strong opposition. Twenty years ago, the advocates of the extensive park system of the Bronx had to overcome the active opposition of two mayors.

On the other hand, the lack of determination, quite as much as the lack of foresight, has delayed important park improvements for generations and has cost the city many millions. Nearly a century ago in 1807, DeWitt Clinton laid out a plan of parks for the island of Manhattan on a generous scale. He proposed to increase the park area by 500 acres. His plan called for nearly four hundred acres

of park land south of 40th Street, a region in which we even now have only ninety acres, and in which we are now laboriously acquiring small parks, at the rate of one million dollars per city block. Seward Park, of about 3 acres, cost more than two million dollars. Perhaps DeWitt Clinton's plan could in his day have been carried out for the price paid for Seward Park. To realize that now would cost several hundred millions. It is now—in the year 1904—proposed to establish a large ocean park at Rockaway. A public improvement like this, whose importance is so self-evident, will seem to most citizens capable of making its own way. But let all such easy going minds ponder over the fact that for two and one-half centuries our municipality has been the leading maritime city of the western hemisphere, and never yet has taken up this matter of an ocean park with intelligent and invincible determination. We have turned our backs on old Neptune, as if our city stood in the midst of a great continent. It is high time for this municipality, like Venice, to go down to the sea and become its bride in the ceremony of dedicating a great ocean park to our people's everlasting use and welfare.

About thirty years ago some one did show some foresight and by legislation at Albany, 75 acres were set apart for a park on the shore of Coney Island at the foot of Ocean Parkway. But the city authorities let the strong waves of the Atlantic continue to beat freely

against this park land until now, as stated in Park Commissioner Kennedy's report, forty-five of the original seventy-five acres lie "under the waters of the Atlantic Ocean." Strong walls and bulkheads have been built for the protection of the remaining thirty acres. Of course, thirty acres at the seashore is nothing but a small park.

He continues:

Probably no incident in the growth of New York is oftener recounted than the great distance of a particular public improvement from the centre of population at the time of inception. And yet, with every new project, the same wearisome objection of "inaccessibility" is reiterated. When will the generation arise that will profit by the experience of the past? A century ago, the park DeWitt Clinton proposed between 23rd and 24th Streets was "inaccessible". In the eighties, the proposed sites of the Great Bronx Parks were "inaccessible". And now, scarcely has the park at Rockaway been broached, when we are told it is "inaccessible". "Inaccessibility"—what a strange objection for Americans to make!

In the remainder of his article he makes short work of this objection, suggesting a plan for filling in the marshes between flatlands and Barren Island and uniting the latter to Rockaway by a draw-bridge, and pointing out that even without this the proposed park could be easily reached by ferry-boats from Coney Island.

Such, then, was his plan—how did he proceed to execute it? Apart from the usual maps and circulars, appeals to the public and endorsements by organizations, leading to hearings before the Board of Estimate, he sought out in person the owner of one of the two largest tracts—a plot of land running from 142nd to 169th Streets, and possessing an ocean frontage of more than one and a quarter miles. From 169th Street on to the point of the island, the land belonged to the railway interests. The owner of the plot in question, Mr. Hatch, of Lord & Taylor's, listened to him, liked him, and gave the City an option of purchase for one million dollars, to which was attached but one condition—that Stover should be the sole intermediary in the transaction. This was on the 1st of June, 1905. Delay had been occasioned by a legal controversy over the ownership of the rest of the land, but this was settled in October, and it seemed not altogether improbable that the City, if it initiated proceedings at once, might find the railway magnates in an accommodating mood. Mayor McClellan recommended the plan in his message of January 1st, 1906, and the Park Engineer, Lewis, who had been antagonistic, was won over. Bills to make possible seaside parks both at Rockaway and Long Beach were introduced at Albany. All seemed to be going smoothly when the Comptroller (Metz) moved to hold up proceedings on the ground of rumors that had reached him that private individuals were scheduled to profit unduly by the sale. This was abso-

lutely false as far as the Hatch deal was concerned, but the old gentleman, who belonged to a school exceedingly sensitive as to its honor, declined further parley and tore up the option he had given Stover. He subsequently sold his holdings to a company of real estate operators for something like \$1,250,000, and as these men began immediately to put up houses, the territory between 142nd and 148th Street, comprising over a quarter mile of sea-front, was lost to the City when it ultimately acquired the remainder of this tract.

In the meanwhile matters dragged on, the City preparing to appoint condemnation commissioners, but doing nothing, until in April, 1907, Stover proposed the formation of a syndicate to purchase the plot for \$1,000,000 and hold it for the City, announcing at the same time that he had secured one subscriber to the sum of \$100,000. Others, however, were slow in coming forward, and this plan, too, was abandoned.

In this whole matter the City officials showed incredible inertia, considering the vastness of the public interests at stake, and the tract finally acquired consisting of the remnant of the Hatch property, 263 acres, for which \$1,343,000 was paid, included little over a mile of ocean front. To this new park—the only one in the city of today having an ocean frontage—the name of Jacob A. Riis, a great friend of parks and recreation, was given, although the man thus honored never had any connection with the place or the effort to secure it.

But even with its acquisition (June, 1913) Stover's work was not ended. During the World War the Navy took over the park as a site for its aviation hangars, and it was three years or more after the conclusion of peace before the Federal Government could be persuaded to terminate its occupation. To bring about the restoration of the park he had labored so hard to procure he carried messages to and from the city and Federal officials, consuming his valuable time to accomplish what should have been the task of the officials in question.

VII.

THE third of those agencies (or the fourth, if we include the Social Reform Club) that served as a convenient background for Stover's activities, while doing useful service of its own, was the East Side Civic Club, an organization composed in large part of merchants and others engaged in business in the neighborhood of the Settlement. The distinctive fight in which it played its part was the conversion of Delancey Street into a broad boulevard fitted to serve as an approach to the Williamsburg Bridge, and the subsequent struggle to keep the elevated railway tracks from spoiling it. It stood also for other neighborhood improvements, in most of which Stover had a hand.

As far as the widening of the street was concerned, that was rendered practically inevitable by the construction of the bridge. Stover's contribution was largely his insistence upon the creation of a green strip in the center, upon which he planted trees during his incumbency of the park commissionership. But no sooner had the broad boulevard been created than the transit interests (or those affiliated with the B. M. T. system whose trains were to cross the new bridge), sought to extend their elevated tracks to connect with the existing

Second and Third Avenue systems. The apparent need for this was facilitated by a defect in the planning of the terminal which placed the bridge tracks at an elevation of 30 feet above the street level at Clinton Street, whence they must somehow or other be continued to the Bowery. To put them into a tunnel would require an expensive rectification of this defect, and who was there in this neglected section of the city who could be expected to offer any objection to a plan that would merely ruin the appearance of the new boulevard? Well, there was Stover, backed by Miss Wald, of the Nurses' Settlement, and the East Side Civic Club. Promptly the campaign was got under way, and East Siders were invited by stirring circulars to rise in defense of their rights. A large delegation of them called on the mayor (March 23rd, 1905) and asked him to kill this plan which included an elevated "loop," to run through Baxter Street, connecting the two bridges. This was objectionable on other grounds besides unsightliness, since it would darken the homes of the poor, and raised the whole movement into one of protest against any more elevated street structures, especially in congested areas. As such it enlisted the support of others besides the East Siders, and a mass-meeting at Miner's Theatre on the Bowery was addressed by Dr. Felix Adler, Frederick W. Hinrichs, of Brooklyn, and District-Attorney Jerome, while the City Club also took a hand. "Probably nothing in recent years," wrote Miss

Wald in The Commons for April, 1905, "has so united those concerned—social workers, business men, real estate interests, pastors, priests and rabbis."

The enemy against which all this was directed, in addition to the railway interest involved, was the press of Brooklyn and a large element in the population of that borough that sought relief at the expense of the East side for its transit difficulties. The reformers had a silent ally in the rival transit system, which did not wish to see its competitor's advantages extended.

The battle before the Rapid Transit Commission was won, but had to be renewed a year later when the Bridge Commissioner took up the issue anew, proposing in addition the "double-decking" of portions of existing roads in the most crowded and noisy section of the city. To be sure, the demand was but for a "temporary" elevated structure, but Stover and his committee well knew that once erected, such a structure would be likely to remain. Again the Rapid Transit Commission was invited to decide whether the desired connection between the two bridges should be underground or overhead, and the Stover organization, now under the name "Citizens' Anti-Elevated Railway Committee," issued an appeal (July 26, 1906) asking for funds with which to engage expert engineering opinion to endorse their plan for subway construction. It was not until the following January (1907) that the Transit Commission took

action in favor of their view, which was immediately upheld by the Board of Estimate, the City's executive authority. In spite of this and the approval of such newspapers as the World, the Times and the Globe, the Assembly at Albany passed as a party measure the following month its bill to permit the construction of the elevated loop. Thus did the opposition continue up to the very end, but approval by the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court (March 13) of the subway plan, together with successive letting contracts for the different sections of the new underground route, soon rendered such proposed legislation ridiculous. The ultimate decision was in favor of a four-track subway, to be separately contracted for and built with all possible speed by the City, remaining under its full control, and when completed not to be restricted to any one company or system, but kept open to the use of any passenger transportation line subject to proper terms of compensation.

Judge Otto A. Rosalsky, of the Court of General Sessions, congratulated Stover in the following words: "As a member of this Committee, I desire to express my appreciation of your untiring efforts in behalf of the people of the East side and of your devotion to their interests. If it were not for your pluck, perseverance, and persistence, I doubt whether as much would have been accomplished." Stover himself said, "I pride myself on having defeated the selfish objects of the Philistines across the river who wanted elevated trains through

Delancey Street. . . . Some people seem to feel that the poor have no rights they are bound to respect. I propose to build a Delancey Street Parkway as a monument on the spot where the Philistines were defeated."

The dedication of this parkway, re-named for Jacob H. Schiff, was deferred until 1921, when Stover, his Park Commissionership long over, was appointed a member of the Mayor's celebration commission. The ornamental clock-tower, designed by Howell & Stokes, upon which he had set his heart, was not included in the design. Once again, as was invariably to be the case, a creation of his was named for some one else.

Other matters dealt with by the East Side Civic Club under his presidency or at his instigation were school accommodations, push-cart markets, street-car transfers and the never-ending question of new sites for small parks and playgrounds.

VIII.

MAYOR GAYNOR's appointment of Stover, at the outset of his administration (January, 1910), to be Park Commissioner for the boroughs of Manhattan and Richmond, a position carrying with it the presidency of the Park Board, afforded the first official recognition of the work he had been doing for years in this field of endeavor, and, more than this, for the first time put in his hands those "tools" for which he had so often longed. He had been a candidate for the post under previous administrations and ascribed his failure to be appointed to the circumstance that he did not conform to the tradition of having a comfortable up-town residence. He continued to live at the Settlement, to which he had removed, at the urgent solicitation of friends, after his serious illness of 1908.

Of his appointment the *Survey* (January 5, 1910) said editorially: "Mr. Stover has been looked upon for many years as the 'father' of parks and playgrounds. Through the Civic Club which he organized and the University Settlement where he lives, at all times and in all places he has been a persistent advocate of the extension of the parks and playgrounds of New York City. He

was among the earliest, if not the very first advocate of an ocean park at Rockaway." The *Tribune* recalled that in association with Abram S. Hewitt way back in 1891 he had established at 91st Street and Second Avenue the first children's playground in New York.

In some of the other press comments a note of anxiety is apparent lest his reputation as a radical should lead to new and startling experiments in park management. Particularly was this the case in the reported plan to make of Union Square a free forum for the people such as exists in Hyde Park, London. That some such place was needed and might well be situated in Union Square was in fact the belief both of Stover and his principal, the Mayor. He had seen the plan in operation in Hyde Park and had reached the conclusion that instead of fomenting disorder, it had proved a potent means of preventing it.

For the rest, in these initial interviews given to the press on first assuming office we find him stressing the city's need of a playground system equal to that of her large parks; the development of parks on Staten Island and on the East River islands, even should it be proved impracticable to remove all the institutions located there; a large provision of baseball and athletic fields; and the further development of free concerts, and if possible even opera, in the open air.

"I have a policy," he tells one of the reporters. "It is for small parks ten blocks apart in populous

districts and along the fringes of the island," and he proceeds to tell in detail where he proposes to put them all.

To Charles Henry Meltzer, the music critic, then writing for the *N. Y. American*, he outlines his hopes for music; he has applied for \$100,000 with which "to take over the restaurant at McGowan's Pass and construct an amphitheatre beneath the adjoining hill for music purposes and to create a popular open-air refreshment-garden, such as one finds in Germany and Austria," and he would like to provide a similar place at Silver Lake, Staten Island. He is convinced that there is a thirst for music among the masses here and hopes that the new stadium at City College can be utilized for music and not reserved exclusively for the students at the college. Before he would consent to turn over the land (then the property of the Park Department) necessary for the construction of the stadium, he insisted upon a provision in the enabling act under which the children of the neighborhood might continue their use of the property as a playground at times when it was not in use by the students. The act when passed provided not only for this, but for the appointment of a play-supervisor at the expense of the college, and for the construction of public baths beneath the structure—provisions which were afterwards ignored by the college Trustees.

As to the schemes for the "popularization" of Central Park, he is opposed to most of them. He

would have no swimming-pool there, not even a wading-pool. He speaks of the changed conditions brought about by the vast population now dwelling at the borders of the Park, how difficult it is to restrain them from trampling the lawns and overflowing all restraints. The appropriation of \$100,000 voted him in the early summer he decides to devote to taking care of the tennis courts and to erect a club house to replace "the forty-year old shacks that would be a disgrace in a mining-camp." It will have storage space for the nets, a refreshment bar and rest room, shower-baths for both sexes, and plenty of room for shelter. Swimming-pools and base-ball grounds he favors, but not in Central Park.

That he is not the wild-eyed radical he appeared to some is shown by the *Tribune's* editorial of March 3, 1910:

Park Commissioner Stover's speech at the dinner in his honor on Tuesday night should set at rest whatever fear may have existed that he would approach the park traditions of the city with rude and radical hands. His announcements show, moreover, how quickly his conception of the park problems of the city is going to bear fruit. There will be ball fields for the boys of the city next summer in numbers hitherto unprecedented. Moreover, the direction of all playgrounds will be such that the maximum use of them will result. This policy is an admirable change from that of half neglect with which park commissioners

have hitherto regarded the provision of facilities for public amusement.

Nor, according to the Commissioner's speech, need any one fear that his mind is exclusively interested in providing amusements. He has a broad view of the uses of parks and is as firmly opposed to the erection of additional buildings in Central Park as any one else in the city. Moreover, he has no notion that Central Park should be thrown open to the public to be used at discretion. The traditions of that park will be safe in his hands. He has no sympathy with those who wish to see it used in the same way in which the little parks of the East Side are used and reduced to the same state of desolation. Indeed, so far is he from holding that opinion that he favors a setting apart of small sections of these much used parks for flower beds and shrubbery, and he would have users taught to respect those reserved spots and take pride in their beauty. That is an experiment which is well worth a trial, and the disposition to undertake it shows that there is no fundamental antagonism between the idea of the parks as the recreation places of the people and the idea of them as natural beauty spots in a great city. Mr. Stover brings to the administration of the parks a wider conception of their utility than most of his predecessors had.

But he was soon to lose the support of the conservative section of the press on quite another

ground, namely his relations with Mr. Samuel Parsons. Mr. Parsons had been Landscape Architect of the Department for thirty-seven years, having been retained in his position through Tammany and Reform administrations alike, and so long as he remained there the old-fashioned New Yorker was assured that all was well with the parks. But Mr. Parsons was frequently away and had grown, perhaps, a little less interested in his work. In one of the interviews from which I have already quoted, Stover, after referring to the need of a plan to lay before the Board of Estimate, remarks a little ominously "and as Mr. Parsons was away, we hired Mr. Leavitt to do it. We could not bring Mr. Parsons back from California and we could not wait." Mr. Parsons, for all the present writer knows, may have been enjoying a well-earned holiday in California, but it is difficult to resist a suspicion that he had outgrown his usefulness in the Department. This, at any rate, was Stover's view, and failing to receive any cooperation from the veteran landscape gardener, he ended by dismissing him from his post. This brought down upon the Commissioner's head a veritable storm of denunciation excusable perhaps, in those who, ignorant of the personalities involved, saw in the episode a political appointee overriding and dismissing an old and tried civil servant, but quite inapplicable to one of Stover's character and acute sense of justice. That the Mayor did not yield to the clamor for his removal is greatly to his credit,

but it is probable that nothing afterwards accomplished by Stover during his commissionership sufficed to undo the effect of his action in this matter.

In the summer of 1912 came an offer from Henry C. Frick to tear down the old Lenox Library building at Fifth Avenue and Seventieth Street and re-erect it in the Park, or wherever the city authorities should see fit. The Municipal Art Commission approved of the project, and for a time Stover seems to have dallied with the idea of permitting it to replace the old Arsenal, which was in bad repair and quite inadequate for its purposes. For this, despite his record of opposition to every form of encroachment upon park territory, he was assailed with abuse and classed as an "invader" of the Park. When he replaced with new paving the graveled roads, which had served well enough the old traffic, but were incompatible with the requirements of the new, he was accused of ignoring the old tradition of the Park. So, too, in removing dead trees he was subjected to ignorant criticism, the policy up to his day having been to let every tree stand so long as it had a leaf remaining on it. New trees were planted in place of those removed. His proposal to erect a music-stand with a sounding-board, such as was already in use in Boston and other cities throughout the country, was magnified by the newspapers into a design to construct a music-hall, the biggest of its kind in the city. Open-air concerts themselves were attacked as contrary

to the spirit of the "founders" of Central Park, but he was able to show that the first one had been held on July 9, 1859, and only three years later the bandstand he was planning to replace had been erected. That these same "founders" did not consider the Park a place for the sole contemplation of nature, but also one for positive recreation and enjoyment is shown by the provision they made for boating, skating and the like. Because he favored one straight path to facilitate access to the tennis-courts and prevent the cutting across lawns to reach them, he was accused of wanting to grid-iron the Park with straight paths, to the elimination of all the winding ones.

And so it went, the public, or a large section of it, under the stimulus of the conservative press, having formed its idea of him as a dangerous innovator, who was out to upset all the cherished traditions of the Park, even as he had evicted old Mr. Parsons. "They are misinformed," he said in his defense (*Times*, June 8, 1912), "who think the present Park Commissioner somewhat of a bull in a china shop, a man of restless spirit, and too wild an imagination. I am merely a man of ordinary intelligence who has studied and kept his eyes open in all the cities of Europe, and I do not think I am likely to be mistaken or to mislead the public in anything relating to the artistic in Central Park, whether it be landscape or architecture." Perhaps that is too proud a boast, in so far as the infallibility of his taste is concerned. Perhaps, too, in

matters of administration, his technique was not always that of the trained executive. Yet his vision of his task as a whole was exact and catholic enough to embrace the old with the new—it is seldom that he does not shine in comparison with his critics.

Coming down to the specific accomplishments of his term as Park Commissioner what must rank first is his creation of a special Bureau of Recreation under the trained direction of Mr. William J. Lee, a playground expert. Thirty new playgrounds, ranging in kind from sand-gardens for tiny infants to athletic fields with full gymnastic equipment, were inaugurated by this Bureau during the first three years of its existence, while the development of a whole series of inter-park contests in base-ball, foot-ball, basket-ball and track athletics, with folk-dance festivals and pageants for the girls, added enormously to the use and popularity of these and the other amusement places. Add to them the school farms, gardens, and observation lots that he was careful to develop, and the value of his contribution to the happiness and well-being of the younger generation cannot be gainsaid.

Second in order of importance, perhaps, was the reclamation of fifteen acres of water front along Riverside Drive—a project of which he was the originator, and which is now being carried out with amplified means under the vigorous present Commissioner of Parks, Mr. Robert Moses.

Third we may rank his repaving with the best bituminous pavement (which is standing up well under usage) of seven out of eleven miles of roadway in Central Park and of a considerable area of Riverside Drive.

These last two accomplishments may be held sufficient to show that he could give his attention to and act with effect in matters quite outside the range of his previous experience.

He created the post of Supervisor of Music in the parks and bestowed it upon Mr. Arthur Farwell, under whose intelligent direction the open-air concerts were greatly extended and informed with the purpose of developing a popular musical culture.

These were perhaps his major achievements. His well-known interest in details of every description supply a list of minor ones (if, indeed, they can all be classified under that description) among which it is difficult to select for mention here. He loved trees and was for planting them wherever he could. Parkways—not only in Delancey Street, but in Seventh Avenue north of the Park, Broadway, and elsewhere—received his particular care. Re-soiling and re-planting went on continuously in Central Park, and mostly under his personal supervision. He created the Shakespeare garden, of which more is said elsewhere in this volume. The Swedish school-house, presented to the City by the Swedish government after the Centennial Fair, he re-conditioned (it had been

degraded to the uses of a toilet-station) and equipped it as an entomological laboratory and school-room for the study of the insects and flora of Manhattan Island. With the assistance of Mr. Charles L. Bernheimer, of the Park Advisory Board, who enlisted a company of bench-loafers equipped (at his expense) with rubber gloves, he succeeded in extirpating poison-ivy from the entire area of the Park with the exception of the jungle surrounding the old fort at the northerly end. Scarcely less than his interest in nature was his regard for history, and this was the means of preserving for the City the old Dyckman house at Broadway and 204th Street as a museum and model of living conditions among the original Dutch settlers of New York. His efforts to obtain it while still Park Commissioner were unavailing, but less than a year later its owners presented it fully furnished to the City.

These were some of his doings as Commissioner—his *doings*, be it noted, as apart from his dreams, for he was a dreamer too, as he himself acknowledged, under the reserve that he kept his dreams in strict subserviance to his practical common sense.

From the day he took office in January, 1910, until October, 1914, he stuck to his post without ever taking a holiday. Then one day he went out to luncheon and did not return. To no one, friend or subordinate in the Department, had he confided his plans. Accordingly, as the days passed and he did not return to his office, the newspapers took

up the report of his disappearance and made a sensation of it. Mr. Robbins Gilman, head of the Settlement, received a letter from him saying that he was inspecting the parks of Philadelphia, and Mr. LaRoche, his assistant, another relating to some routine matters, and then some weeks passed without his being heard from. When at last he was discovered by a reporter in New Orleans, he explained only that he had been engaged in a study of the park systems in a number of American cities.

There can be little doubt that the principal cause of his "disappearance" was his sensitiveness to the unjust criticism to which he had been subjected by the newspapers throughout nearly his entire term of office. When asked, upon his return, whether that had accounted for his going away, he replied, "Not altogether—but you know what that does to a man." He must have brooded over this injustice until despondency obtained the upper hand—his old sense of the futility of trying to help a perverse generation.

Mayor Gaynor was dead; his own term was within a month or two of its end. No doubt he was tired from excessive application to the duties of his office and to the long after hours he devoted to reading upon special subjects that came up in connection with those duties. Habituated for years to lonely living, with nobody to mark his coming and going, he was capable of thinking he could do as he pleased without exciting comment. His modesty forbade his remembering that circumstances

were different, now that he held a public office. If, as must have happened during the many weeks that elapsed before his return, he saw what a sensation the newspapers had made of his disappearance, my guess is that his feelings were divided between indignation and amusement—indignation first, arousing a stubborn obstinacy in the pursuit of his private plans, and later a sly enjoyment of all the commotion he was causing!

He left untouched the checks for his salary that had accumulated during the period of his absence, although clearly entitled to them since he had not availed himself of a Commissioner's privilege of a month's vacation in every year. Perhaps he had no use for them now that his public labors were at an end, for a large proportion of his remuneration during his period of office—no one can say how much—was returned to the City in the form of donations to make good deficiencies in appropriations allotted to improvements in which he was interested.

IX.

ON HIS return from his travels in January, 1914, his Park Commissionership ended, Stover had not intended remaining at the settlement, but the warmth of his reception persuaded him to stay, and he continued to reside there for the rest of his life.

One problem which had worried him upon return from Europe, but was solved for the time being by his appointment as Park Commissioner, was now revived—the problem, namely, of what to live on while he continued his work. As we have seen, he kept little or nothing for himself out of his salary as Commissioner, preferring to spend it on public work. It is probable that whenever he had money he was exceedingly generous in coming to the relief of others; nor did he ever exact any return of the favors he extended. Among his papers at the Settlement were found a considerable number of uncashed checks—remittances, in all probability, from friends who knew or guessed at his plight, but which he had been unable to bring himself to accept.

One suspects that he took literally the biblical injunction to take no thought for the morrow, as he had already taken literally Christ's admonition to the young man to give all he had to the poor.

On the other hand he had an invincible objection to selling his services as a social worker, perhaps because he knew he could only work alone and in his own way, and because he wished to be free to switch his attention to whatever seemed the issue of the moment without being fettered by engagements previously undertaken. This feeling was too strong to permit of his acceptance of the position of Head Worker at the Settlement, and at first he lodged there merely, having no provision whatever for his bodily needs. This could not, of course, continue, and with difficulty his friends brought him to consent to receive at their hands a sum just sufficient for him to live on and continue his work. This was different from charity because no one subscribed to the fund who had not been for years familiar with his work and was reluctant to see it discontinued, as it necessarily would be were he compelled to leave the city. For accepting this he incurred the criticism of some who contended that a man's first duty is to provide for his own support. But in what did his position differ from that of any minister of religion whose salary is provided by his congregation, except that he got nothing beyond what was barely necessary to keep him in the field? In the last years of his life the Settlement gave him his board, and no man can say that the gift was not richly returned in the care he lavished upon the camp at Beacon, to say nothing of the counsel and support he gave, the policies he initiated, in the conduct of the institu-

tion itself. If he were never nominally its Head Worker, his name is yet the one that will be longest remembered in connection with the institution, to which his unique personality acted as a lode-stone, drawing to it seekers in one field or another illuminated by his experience.

While still Commissioner we find him urging on the Settlement a policy of greater activity in civic matters outside the four walls of the Settlement house. Referring to his proposed planting of 250 Lombardy poplars in Delancey Street, he asked prophetically how long they would stay there unless the children of the neighborhood were taught a greater respect for growing things. The proper construction of ash-carts and the flushing of the streets with salt water in summer were suggested as other objects to work for, and—his old dream—the establishment of an East Side Museum and Art Gallery to stimulate the artistic consciousness among the neighbors.

While still Commissioner, too, he had presided at the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Settlement on January 20, 1912, and was to serve again at its fortieth anniversary in 1927 as its historical chronicler. In his foreword written for the latter occasion he has much to say that is interesting. After tracing its beginnings and establishing its claim to priority among American settlements, he outlines its history, and finds it still in the fullness of its youth, reflecting the spirit of its founders who, if they beheld visions, never became visionary.

Despite the teachings of the "Downfall" school of literature citing the upward and downward trends of mankind, he ventures to doubt whether anyone knows the end, and says, for himself: "But this much, in my belief, we may know from the past, namely, that he chooses the better part who devotes his whole strength of body, mind and soul to the progress of mankind to perfection."

Among the forces of the day that make for progress, he is still convinced, are the settlements. Their contribution to social betterment is real, and their work should go on. If they are no longer needed to Americanize the foreigner, they have a task at once more important and more difficult in making men of the native-born youths of today. And he concludes:

The making of men! That is the Settlement's task. And our public schools and other state agencies can no more render the Settlement's task superfluous than they can completely take over the duties of parents. Knowing that all settlements have not the same scope and outlook, and speaking now strictly from our own Settlement's standpoint, I should say that the settlement circle is more akin to the family circle than it is to the public school. But let each of this trinity of influences be maintained, strengthened and upheld. And as for our Settlement, its chief glory, as I see it, being the upbuilding of character, let us have renewed devotion and determination go on in work of making men.

That is Stover at his best, and would seem to show that under the tranquilizing influences of his later life at Camp, his earlier distrust of mankind had at last given way. Or was it only "the better part" to assume its capability for perfection?

It is not generally known that to his efforts, more than to those of any other is due the preservation of the Settlement in its original form and independent status. So desperate was the financial position of the institution in the autumn of 1918 that the Council had reached a decision to turn it over to the Jewish Federation, or some other philanthropic society possessed of sufficient means to operate it under plans of their own designing. To prevent this Stover resolved upon a personal appeal to some half-a-dozen former members of the Settlement clubs who had "made good" in the business world, and we have the testimony of one of them that he devoted himself for days and days to this task with the result of persuading them not only to supply the required financial assistance, but to become themselves members of the Council, thus putting the Society as a whole in the hands of those who had been in early youth among its beneficiaries. He would like, I think, to see their names cited here. Those of whom I have a memorandum are: Albert A. Volk, Max Graff, Charles J. Cohen, and Jacob A. Voice.

Before taking him to that final scene, the camp he loved, where the happiest days of his life were to be spent, there is one other episode belonging to

the period following his retirement from public office which is worth the telling because it illustrates, perhaps better than any other, those qualities of patient tact and disinterested persistence to which he was able to subdue the vehemence of his nature.

In a letter to Mrs. Louis Stoiber of November 30, 1916, he refers to his efforts to get the statue of Samuel J. Tilden accepted by the executors of his estate and placed by the City, saying "thus far everything has come to pass as I outlined the undertaking in the two contracts between the executors and the sculptor and the architects." By his timely intervention he had brought about the abandonment by the sculptor of his law-suit against the executors, and so tangled had been the various relationships involved that upon his delivery of the agreement which he had held in escrow, he was congratulated by the plaintiff's lawyer in the words "You are the only person in the world who could have done this."

In the end he did not get his way with regard to the placing of the statue. He wished it to stand in the center of Park Avenue just north of 34th Street in a position whence it would dominate the long reach of Fourth Avenue below. Instead it was erected on the greensward of Riverside Drive at 112th Street—a site not only far less commanding in itself, but one where it can be seen by far fewer people.

We have already had occasion in connection with other matters to admire the effectiveness of

his powers of persuasion. Here is one more instance of it, cited by himself, but without giving the name of the person concerned or identifying the project undertaken. A very old man, he says, who knew him only through the press, sought his advice and it was accepted. When later, in other people's hands, the project got into a tangle, the old man sent for him again, and he was able to get the approval of the City authorities for the proposed public structure.

X.

THE closing and certainly happiest years of his life were spent prevailingly at the summer camp of the University Settlement at Beacon, N. Y. Even in the dead of winter he made frequent sojourns there and organized parties of young people to accompany him for the period of any convenient holiday. There in the country quietness, while he worked upon his plans for the improvement of the Camp and engaged, himself, upon their practical realization, it is probable that he won through at last to that serenity of mind which had been so rare a visitant in the days of his feverish activity in the city.

This property, 225 acres in extent, had been the country estate of the late General Joseph Howland, as a memorial to whom it was presented to the Settlement in 1910 by his widow, Mrs. Eliza Woolsey Howland. But the Society, in financial difficulties, had been obliged by 1914 to sell a considerable portion of it—some 160 acres—including the family residence, and what Stover found when he first visited it in the Spring of 1917 was the outlying half of the estate with only a farm-house set amid acres of pasturage and a fringe of woodland, through which a brook descended

from Mount Beacon in whose shadow the whole estate lay. The farm-house, as he was prompt to discover, had been for two summers, 1857 and 1858, the country home of Henry Ward Beecher, then in the early years of his Brooklyn pastorate. The locality was known in those days as Mattawan, and of the house Beecher wrote: "We are living in a pleasant house around which fruit-trees have grown, in which birds have bred and lived unmolested from year to year." Beecher was one of Stover's heroes, and the memory of his sojourn there did much, in his eyes, to sanctify the spot.

For several years before Stover's coming, the Settlement had been sending children—only boys at first—to its summer "camp". There were about two hundred the first summer, and nearly twice as many the next. But the difficulties were many and great, chief among them being the distance between the farm-house where they slept and the "Mansion" (it had not yet been sold) where they ate. There was also a dearth of all amusement except hiking in the woods; to go for a swim involved a three-mile walk to the neighboring Hudson—much too long a stretch for a majority of the young guests. So discouraging were the conditions that the abandonment of the property as a camp site was being seriously considered about the time of Stover's coming there—for a different purpose altogether.

This was, as has been said, in the Spring of

1917—to be precise, in April of that year, just after the entrance of the United States into the World War when President Wilson had summoned the country to a food—and particularly to a potato-raising campaign. Stover was among the first to enlist, applying to himself and the two or three who accompanied him the initials S.O.S.—Soldiers of the Soil (when the company had increased they added another S, making it Stover's Soldiers of the Soil). In the face of enormous difficulties they planted thirteen acres of potatoes and five of other vegetables in the seven months succeeding their arrival. Yet, we have the testimony of one of the original band, Mr. Jacob Eichel, that the first thing that Stover said on stepping out of the farmhouse door was: "And first we will plant a garden"—on the spot, that is, where he later planted the actual garden of today. From the beginning he was resolved that the place should not be abandoned as a camp site, and his faith and courage determined the outcome.

It is in the Settlement report for the year 1919 that his name is first mentioned in connection with the Camp. "Under the remarkable leadership of Mr. Charles B. Stover," it says, "the camps were transformed," and it goes on to enumerate the improvements effected. The improvements were of comparatively minor importance that year, but the following three years were to see vast changes in the Camp. Some of these changes are described by Stover himself in the Settlement Report for

Biographical Sketch
of
Charles B. Stover

1922. The first was a new wing to Beecher House, housing on the ground floor a modern kitchen, capable of supplying meals for 400 to 500 people, and making possible the demolition of the old unsightly kitchen shanties. On the second floor were three bath-rooms and four bed-rooms, all, he tells us, badly needed, while a spacious attic, intended for storage, completed the building. The new wing was flanked on two sides by massive stone towers constructed of stones of the field. That on the north side was designed to perpetuate the memories of Joseph and Eliza Howland, the Camp's benefactors. That on the south contained an open belfry in which was to hang a small replica of the Philadelphia Liberty Bell, and bore on its face, between the first and second story, this inscription: "1776, Independence Liberty Bell Tower Dedicated to the Interdependence and Liberation of all Nations, Tribes, and Tongues, 1922." Did ever dinner-bell clang for meals in tones of a wider patriotism?

Two large dormitories for children, one of them containing a room 22 by 32 feet for library, museum, and council purposes, as well as a stage so placed with respect to adjacent buildings as to provide an outdoor auditorium with good acoustic facilities, formed the second major improvement. These dormitories were built with broad porches covered by wide overhanging roofs reaching eight feet beyond the main wall of the structures, affording protection from sun and storm, and keeping

the interiors cool and dry. They were designed to accommodate 150 children at a time, but until more could be built the policy of taking boys for one half of the summer and girls for the other had still to be maintained.

Another improvement, due to the generosity of Mr. Charles J. Cohen, was a new and permanent bridge across the little brook with a retaining wall and terrace on the north side of the house.

In this year too (1922) the beginnings were made upon that formal garden upon which he had from the first set his heart. The large contributions necessary to bring it into existence were made by Mr. Herman Robinson. Here is Stover's description of its design: "This garden covers an area of 60 by 60 feet, having the Doric Porch (of his own design) for its central axis. It is surrounded by a low stone wall, 18 inches thick, and all its walks are built of concrete $2\frac{1}{2}$ feet in the ground, and of varying widths, as $2\frac{1}{2}$, 5, and 15 feet. At great expense, all the soil within this 60-foot-square area was screened to a depth of $2\frac{1}{2}$ to 3 feet to get rid of the infernal roots of the crab or witch grass, which infests the ground. Much is written on this subject. I can state, from last year's experience, here is a sure, though, costly, way of ridding your ground of witch grass."

Continuing, he tells us that the Central Walk, 15 feet wide, leading from the porch down around the Lily Pond, to the steps into the 200-feet-long sunken lawn, "is covered with imported Welsh

tiles, 9 inches square, and of various shades of brown and numbering nearly 900—generously given, for this purpose, by the Mosaic Tile Co., of Zanesville, Ohio, and New York City.”

To this garden we shall recur before closing this account of his activities at camp.

He closes his report of the building operations in this remarkable year by referring to the bungalows erected at their own expense by some of the older Settlement clubs for their own use, the understanding being that they should become at once Settlement property, but should be kept for the use of the clubs erecting them so long as that remained the desire of the members. In this way was formed the nucleus of a senior colony in the camp.

Later improvements included the construction of model tennis-courts; the building of a tier of seats about the quadrangle thereby creating a stadium; a new wash-house; and finally, his crowning achievement, the creation of a swimming pool at the camp, thus making forever unnecessary that wearisome, and to the little ones dangerous, trek to the river.

In all of this work his spirit was the guiding one. Much of the actual work—in addition to nearly all of its planning—he did, himself, particularly in the field of carpentering, road-making and gardening. And it was to his gift for infecting others with his enthusiasm that the funds for most of the improvements were obtained, these coming

in large part from the alumni of Settlement clubs whose members he had known from their boyhood up.

In his planning for this garden we find some of his distinctive characteristics at play. First, his love of beauty, which made him so greatly desire it. Then the thoroughness with which he planned every detail in advance, and the patience with which he applied himself to its realization. Next his capacity, as shown in his struggle with the witch grass, for exterminating the harmful and encouraging the useful in nature. Lastly, in his insistence upon doing the work himself. We find him writing the local florist during his serious illness asking him to keep the plants yet a little longer as he had set his heart on planting them with his own hands.

Thus was the garden created, and it grew in beauty year by year. Two small brick arches facing each other in the opposite walls to afford a pleasant vista of the shrubs and gayly-colored blooms he designed and helped erect. Over one of them in tiled letters he set the words of Moses: "And the Lord God planted a garden in Eden", while over the other he wrote "Oneself must Gardener and Gardener be," to which he appended a modest "S". In the center of the garden he placed, as has been told, a fountain, in which in due time, to the delight of the children, a bull-frog came to reside. Not far off a bronze sun-dial on a circular mount was erected as a memorial to a departed

friend of the Camp. It became his delight when any portion of the Camp or garden had been completed to photograph it, and in this art he developed a high degree of proficiency.

Mr. Eichel tells us that he believes his favorite flower to have been the Sweet Illysum, that humble growth that sprays the ground with its tiny white petaled fragrance, while he also delighted in the purple Portulaca, just as he loved porphyry among stones. Nor was his interest confined to flowers. We have noted his interest in trees in connection with his work in the parks, and he lived to satisfy his desire to plant an orchard at the Camp. An arboretum and a pinetum were among his more ambitious dreams.

By the year 1928 there were more than one thousand children making use of the Camp, while some three hundred and fifty young men and women belonging to the older Settlement groups were sharing in the occupation of the Senior quarters. Dramatics, woodcraft, nature-study, evening song, self-governing camp councils, and a library, in addition to hiking, outdoor and indoor games, and swimming in the pool supplied them with occupations. Among them Stover lived in the utmost simplicity. The first one up in the morning—at 6:00 A.M.—he went as soon as dressed to the spring for a drink of the cold mountain-water. Then for two or three hours before breakfast he worked in the garden or at whatever construction work that happened to be in progress. At meals

he never touched meat and rarely fish. Most of the rest of the day was spent at work in some part of the Camp. In the late afternoon he loved to show children the garden, and in the evening to hear them sing, while sometimes he varied this by a visit to the Senior Camp, where he talked with its inmates. While there was at times some complaint about noise at night, he never seemed to mind it—perhaps his reading kept him up until after it had ceased. The only variation to this routine occurred upon the days when he went to the local library at Beacon to read. The history of the neighborhood interested him intensely.

At a conference of the club leaders and Settlement workers held on September 6th, 1920, soon after the completion of the new hall, it was voted unanimously to name it for the man who had personally supervised its erection. The minutes recording this action end with the words "Mr. Stover expressed his objections to the hall being named after him." Since then the Settlement has decided to give his name to the entire Camp he so loved and served, and he is no longer here to interpose his objection.

XI.

BEFORE closing this account one would like to say something of that amazing personality of his which never failed to impress and in many cases completely captivated those with whom he came into contact.

In thinking of him there comes to my recollection these lines written of another:

Absolute confidence in his own belief was joined to truest personal humility and made the prophet. Humblest and least ambitious of men, he felt his call from God; and in God's name he was assertive, dogmatic, sometimes seemingly egotistic. If he spoke authoritatively and intolerantly, it was that a duty was laid upon him and woe to him if he preached it not. His principles were living and victorious certainties to him. "If a principle is true," he said, "its applications are not only possible, but inevitable," and this unquestioning conviction made him as fearless morally as he was intellectually—fearless with the supreme bravery of one who never shrinks from duty—fearless not only for himself, but for others, bridling all the impulsive tenderness within him, and requiring of his fellow-workers the same readiness for sacrifice which he exacted of himself.

These words are not wholly applicable to Stover, but they cast a light upon that strange intermixture of humility and self-assertion that was characteristic of so much of his utterance. He spoke not for himself, but as the agent of a Higher Power, whose divinity he sought in vain to deny. Yet he did not seek controversy and was capable of great self-restraint so long as the occasion did not seem to demand his intervention. "So you think *that?*", he would say, his eye-brows raised, a merry twinkle in his eye, but if injustice were involved, or the heresy that had been advanced too heinous to let pass, his brow would cloud, his eye flash fire, and he would give full vent to his natural vehemence of expression. Not often, even so, did he give offense, his audience being quick to divine the impersonal quality of his anger.

To describe his personality to one who did not know him would be as difficult as to trace that illusive smile that hovered on his lips and was reflected in his eyes until obliterated by the gathering thunder-cloud on his brow.

He resorted readily to Biblical turns of thought and expression to illustrate his meaning, these forming a natural heritage of his theological education, and used them frequently with astonishing force and directness. Forgetting sometimes that they reflected dogmas he had renounced, he would seize upon them in the passion of debate, as on one public occasion he exclaimed: "*The meek do not inherit the earth. I hope some day to discuss this with Jesus Christ!*"

In his relations with the laborers of the Park Department, as described in Mr. Stanley Bero's paper following this sketch of his life, we see his personality at play. Whatever the matter that occupied his thoughts he would go into it thoroughly, not considering it exhausted until he had read everything available upon the subject.

Once when a near friend was smitten with what seemed an incurable disease, he buried himself in the Public Library for days reading all he could lay his hands on that bore upon the disease and its treatment. Obviously there is danger in such methods. One cannot become a doctor, an architect, or a successful transplant of trees by dint of reading, no matter how intensive, and the danger lies in coming to think that because we know a little we know it all. This is a danger from which newspapermen commonly suffer. But that it adds materially to our intelligence can scarcely be denied, and Stover did not often misapply it.

Subject as he was to tortured moods when all his life seemed vain and humanity itself not worth the saving, there had to be moments of harshness in his attitude toward others as well as outbreaks against the creator of such a misshapen universe. But in such moods he usually kept himself apart—sometimes in actual hiding—so that his torture was most frequently self-consumed.

He was a genuinely modest man, could never bear to have plaudits heaped upon him either in

public or in private. But he was conscious of his worth, of the disinterested character of his services, and he boiled over with a sense of injustice when praise for something he had initiated and accomplished was bestowed in the wrong quarter. Particularly was this the case when the individual selected to receive the applause was a mere "money-bags", or one who had been drawn into the effort for the publicity value of his name. The question took on for him then the aspect of a social injustice by which the great gullible public were once more to be fooled. Making no claim to be rewarded himself, it was the more intolerable to see the reward bestowed on another. But even when this did not happen he suffered from the indifference and neglect with which were received nearly all his efforts to improve conditions in the community where he lived, and came to reproach that community for its failure to supply the instruments needed for its own improvement. Forgetting that one symptom of that need was the lack of its recognition on the part of the community, he railed against its indifference to his own and others' efforts to supply it. "No citizen of this city," he writes in a private letter dated January 2, 1908, "has a greater desire for public work than I have, but for no citizen's help has this city shown less desire than for mine. This has been my experience for twenty years. Shall I continue to work under the old conditions during the twice twenty years I have yet to live? By no means. For then I were

not only the city's biggest fool, but its biggest sinner also. I know the meaning of right and wrong as fully as anybody in New York, and I have decided to discontinue my public work under the old conditions. This will be clear to everybody's understanding when I leave New York at an early date, never to return. In this procedure I shall follow the example of Jesus Christ and His early disciples, who had a higher and firmer respect for the cause they represented than have New York reformers for theirs."

And, the further to define his position, he writes ten days later: "When I am gone, some people doubtless will say that I was indignant at the want of *appreciation* shown me here, as for example in the repeated refusal of mayors to appoint me Commissioner This or Commissioner That. I do hope that neither you nor any other member of the Outdoor Recreation League Executive Committee will think or express such a thought. It seems to me that there is not a little evidence in my last twenty years to show that as much as any other citizen I have been ready to work for the city without appreciation of any sort. I do believe I can say of *appreciation*, official or unofficial, with more strength of feeling than Whitman said of Good Fortune: 'I don't ask it. I *am* Appreciation.' No! When I sought to be made Park Commissioner, it was not for recognition, appreciation, or public gratitude, nor even very largely for the *opportunity* for work thus afforded (though I have often put it this way),

but chiefly to secure Tools for public work. Show me among the living or dead of this city one other citizen who has engaged in public work as long, as uncomplainingly, as persistently, and with as strong a desire, and (shall I say it?) with an equal ability to accomplish things, who at the same time has been in like degree *denied* the Tools of Warfare and Work, and I'll not leave New York. But no, in this modern Sodom you can't find one. The distinction thrust upon me is a dishonor which, as I believe I said in my previous letter, no disciple of Righteousness should stand in any one city for more than twenty years."

He is thinking of himself no doubt, when he concludes: "Here and there are idealists who are more than a match for the very devils of the political world; men who can mingle with politicians and make their rascality and incompetence serve Heaven. To keep such men out of office is a sin, and deprives government of a purifying leaven."

It is for the light they radiate upon his personality that the above extracts from his letters of the period are cited. In his nature were united to a degree nearly amounting to genius a deep spirituality with a strong and clear sense of the practical. His life abounds in examples of both and sometimes they intermingled in queer proportions, the idealist erecting into an Abstraction, usually garbed in the trappings of an outworn theology, some quite common phenomenon of every day human experience, while the practical man spurned

every suggestion that the influence of character, divorced from a possession of the "tools," could avail aught in the modern world.

He did not leave New York at this time, but remained to be stricken with the first of his very severe attacks of inflammatory rheumatism, which laid him low throughout the spring and summer months of 1908. In the winter of 1910 came, as we have seen, his appointment as Park Commissioner by Mayor Gaynor, which did something to redeem the neglect of which he had so bitterly complained.

XII.

AFTER what has been said above concerning his attitude towards life, it is not surprising that he never married. Perhaps he was too greatly pre-occupied with the good of society as a whole to permit his mind to dwell upon a personal happiness—perhaps he did not even deem such a thing possible. From the purely “social” side of life—using that word in its restricted sense—he was ever averse. Why the ladies of the College Settlement, a few blocks away from his Forsyth Street rooms, should ask him to dinner or afternoon tea he could not understand. After leaving unanswered several such invitations, he offers an apology, but adds “I ask you to bear in mind that I am fully persuaded that I am unqualified, both by disposition and training, to sit at dinner-table or fireside in easy conversation. To these things most people lean. I don’t.” He made it a principle never to appear in evening dress. Yet when Miss Greene calls his attention to “a sad short-coming” of his in his attitude towards the other sex, he defends himself vigorously, writing her (January 19, 1899) “I don’t plead guilty to a ‘blind bias,’ an ‘indiscriminate hostility’ to the other half of society. To whom must I yield in my fair and

friendly opinion of the better half of the race? Some reading and much observation have made me discriminating. But hostile? Oh, 'tis a monstrous falsehood! You may have good authority for some outward facts. The fault lies in the interpretation. I confess to frequent sinning against conventionalities. No, not sinning, for I would have it otherwise"—and he goes on to trace the blame to some Power, not himself, "with whom I have not yet arrived at a satisfactory understanding. This I hope yet to accomplish." And he continues, not without a sly humor, "Still, at times, I make a bold dash (into the conventional). Have I not agreed to call on Mrs. Murphy? (wife of the watchman at Hudsonbank) And gladly would I have called upon Miss Williams if you had only informed me of her failure to call today." It will have to be admitted, I think, that the lapse into humor hardly helps the defense. There is another occasion on which he pleads with Miss Greene to undertake a speech before a feminine audience, alleging his own inexperience and incompetence under such conditions. Nor can we overlook the invitation and manifest sincerity of his inquiry "Why do girls giggle, anyway? Must Spring bear the blame? Would it not be the same in December? When a School Trustee I observed this and came to dread the 'Female Department'."

It is a fact that his following on the East Side was preponderantly a masculine one, while the girls showed a marked partiality towards King, for

the rest strongly reciprocated by him. Lest it be inferred, however, from the above quotations that his attitude towards women was that of a boor, there need only be recalled his tenderness to children and the long hours of patient consideration he gave to the complaints of women teachers, the woes of old Jewish mothers and the like.

By the Autumn of 1916 he seems to have reached that "more satisfactory understanding" with the higher Power, hinted at in his letter to Miss Greene, but it is to the further detriment of his "social" relations. After failing to keep a Thanksgiving Day engagement at the house of Louis Stoiber, he writes Mrs. Stoiber "The Almighty is opposed to my eating Thanksgiving. Christmas, or any other dinner in other people's homes. When I accepted, weeks ago, it was only under pressure, for such experience has taught me the will of the Almighty. He wills that I have no participation in home pleasures, of my own, or of my friends. This I tell you not by way of complaint, but by way of explanation. I suffer greatly, however, when as today I disappoint my friends. Therefore, I wish they would never invite me into their houses. . . . God wills that my contact with men, even with friends, shall be in a public way. Then He helps me."

Yet he did not inevitably refuse an invitation to dine at the house of an intimate friend, and on the rare occasions when he accepted he was a delightful guest, abounding in anecdote derived from

the field of his public endeavor, and disarming criticism of any view that might seem too extreme for general acceptance by some deprecatory gesture and the slow sweetness of his smile.

Besides children, he liked animals, and especially cats. Indeed his interest in cats was unusual, for however earnestly engrossed in conversation or argument he could not refrain, when one appeared, even the most derelict specimen of its race, from dropping his theme and stooping to stroke its fur. And the animals seemed to be aware of his sympathy and to return it. But most of all, I think, was he at home among practical men. That is why politicians liked him even when they knew he saw through their schemes. He enjoyed supervising, directing, and in the end tackling the job himself. Until he did this he could not be quite sure it was well done, perfect in every part, and his nature abhorred slack work. His interest extended even to the spelling of proper names, in which he would not knowingly tolerate a mistake. As an administrator this attention to details amounted to a weakness because it consumed too much of his time and deprived subordinates of a sense of responsibility.

XIII.

HE LOVED music, art, architecture, poetry and nature and willingly saw himself as architect and landscape gardener, and if in such matters his task was not always impeccable, his recognition of the role reserved for Art in every civic undertaking was a characteristic of his high intelligence. It may be doubted whether any other enjoyment be allowed to come within his reach excelled that he obtained by poring over the masterpieces of antiquity in whatever field they might lie. It was by no accident that one of the first of his great services to the city lay in the part he played in getting the Metropolitan Museum to open its doors on Sunday afternoons, and in the East Side Civic Club Souvenir Journal (December, 1904) he pleads for a museum nearer the homes of the people. The arch he was so anxious to see erected at the bridge entrance in Delancey Street was another project very near his heart.

His mind was stored with memories of the exquisite architecture he had seen abroad, and he would have liked to reproduce it all. When the opportunity came to remodel the old farmhouse at Beacon he designed two porches of different Greek orders and helped execute them himself. They

were good in themselves and went not too badly with the old building, but when he added something in the Renaissance tradition in addition to a gargoyle—for the purpose of affording visual instruction in the various schools of architecture—the result was “not so good.”

He could join, himself, in the laugh raised against him, and contributed to it not a little in the account he gave of how he hunted that gargoyle. After it had attracted his attention in the window of an old furniture shop on Houston Street, and failing to find any general depot for gargoyles, he had at last taken his heart in his hand and gone in to inquire the price. The proprietor, who in all probability had never been asked that question before, said at a venture, “Ten Dollars.” Stover offered two, and departed its proud possessor!

His manner of telling the story illustrated well a characteristic of his sense of humor, in which a pretended naiveté was belied by the bright, aware look in his eyes.

Towards “Modern” Art his attitude was one of fierce and avowed hostility, seeing as he did in the whole movement not only the conscious challenge it offers to the classic conceptions of the older art, but a deliberate defilement which he was more than half inclined to ascribe to a hatred born of incompetence. So in literature he decried the tendency as exemplified in the “new” biography to set down the faults and imperfections of its

subjects, preferring to have them presented to future generations with lustre undimmed as saints and heroes, shining examples to mankind. In general he saw in art the handmaiden of morality and was slow to recognize that even though his thesis be true that only a great theme is productive of the highest art, too often propaganda is destructive of the end he would have it serve.

To public entertainment, including music, for which he had a passion, he came to adopt the attitude that he had no right to its enjoyment until it should become accessible to all.

XIV.

ALTHOUGH by far the larger part of the work upon which he was engaged was for the benefit of the people as a whole, he held in higher regard than most others his neighbors of the East Side, those people of a persecuted race with whose efforts to find their way in a new environment he was brought every day into sympathetic contact. For the Jews he professed a special affinity, going so far on one occasion as to suggest that his middle name Bunstein was of Semitic origin. There is nothing in the family records to support such a claim, but if he did not derive from Jewish ancestors on the physical side he might with some justice have claimed a spiritual descent from the Old Testament prophets who were among his favorite reading. For the East Side itself, his home for so many years, he had a particular sentiment which found expression, outside the University Settlement and the East Side Civic Club, in many personal friendships.

In the English language issue of the Jewish Daily News for April, 1903, he published an article entitled "Loyalty to the East Side," in which he preached the duty to remain residents of that region upon the many who are inclined

to abandon it as soon as their material circumstances will permit. While admitting the physical impossibility for all to remain there, as well as the numerous changes in individual circumstance that necessitates a change of abode, he calls upon the gifted and thoughtful "to stay in the district and labor for all that is beautiful, true and good in the lives of our fellow-citizens." With the "social ladder" motive for removal he has naturally no patience, denying that any greater degree of respectability attaches to a residence on Fifth Avenue than to one on Hester Street, and quoting the lines:

'Tis not the house that honor makes,
True honor is a thing divine;
It is the mind precedence takes,
It is the spirit makes the shrine.

Nor can charity make amends for the abandonment of the old home. On the subject of the rich he quotes from Channing: "The rich satisfy themselves by giving alms to the needy. They think little of more fatal gifts which they perpetually bestow. They think little that their idolatry of outward prosperity, and their contempt of inferior conditions, are teaching the destitute that there is but one good on earth, namely, property." How much better if rich and poor were to live side by side, in daily personal contact! While if the hundreds of college graduates who come from the East Side would continue to live there, "then the terms University and College Settlement would

acquire a new meaning, a deeper one than we yet have known. Every house would be a University Settlement. Every house would have its man or woman of trained intellect, always at hand to speak for the right, against the wrong." By sowing the seeds of local pride and self-help the East Side would become "a giant, capable of winning its own battles, without the help of uptown reserves." Yet he is willing to make some allowance for the ambition of the Jew, obsessed with memories of the Ghetto and what they symbolized, to make money enough to lift himself and his family out of sordid and degrading surroundings.

XV.

OF ROBUST health—except for two dangerous and badly crippling attacks of inflammatory rheumatism—he often expressed himself convinced that he would live to be one hundred. Had his life been prolonged there is reason to believe that he might have been led to undertake his own autobiography. In a letter to Gregory Weinstein, dated September 29, 1927, he writes:

I fully agree with the sentiments expressed in your last letter as to the foolishness of letting others tell my story—if I think myself it should be told.

My real preference is to be writ in water—just such complete obliteration as the poet Keats feared would be his fate. My longing for immortality, either in the after life or in this, is totally imperceptible in my own consciousness.

Should I write my tale its purpose would be to tell the historic truth concerning matters which others are unable or unwilling to get straight.

Then too concerning the meaning of life. I have certain unrecorded beliefs which for novelty and perhaps for worth may deserve telling.

Anyhow, whatever the ultimate outcome, I am strongly disposed to giving much time, this coming winter, to the better arrangement of my material, the very thing I have been doing here the past three weeks, with papers accumulated in the Camp.

But while in appearance so vigorous and alert, it is probable that those long midnight vigils, the days when out of preoccupation with his work, absorption in his bitter thought, or sometimes, I fear, even sheer necessity, he went without food, must have weakened and at last broken down the power of resistance in that splendid constitution of his. Indeed he confesses in a letter written during the first of these illnesses (July, 1908) that his recovery will be slower than prophesied by his physician and nurse on account of the abstemious living of a life-time. Yet he dismissed his nurse too soon, insisted on going out for short walks from each of which it took two or three days to recover, and resisted for long his removal to the country, where at the house of his friend Fred M. Stein, he at length completed his convalescence.

The second attack, which was complicated by erysipelas and pneumonia, overtook him, he tells us, at 8:00 P.M. on Monday, March 16, 1927. "But," he continues, "I kept it secret from the very residents of the Settlement for three days and from all doctors for five days, believing that my own well cared-for mind and body would themselves drive out the devils; and as a matter of fact

on the sixth day this very thing did come to pass, but on the seventh day the main devil (arthritis?) came back, in diminished strength, and has managed to cling to some part of my body ever since. Now he has but a slender hold. All this illness I regard not as a pulling-down, but as a building-up process; a cleansing and a purifying process; a preparation for a long period of health and strength."

And in another letter he writes, "Both in general appearance and in weight I remained (illegible) unaffected by the broadside attack. And in mind also I suffered not the least loss of vigor or of lively interest in books, papers and the affairs of life."

He wrote himself an account of this, his second illness, which concludes with the words, "If I may indicate anything about the above, beyond a truthful statement of the facts, it is to more or less confirm my already indicated fond belief that by the strict, simple rules of living I have followed since my last illness twenty years ago I have brought my body into a state of both defensive and offensive action against disease which almost insures unbroken health."

Almost! Alas, he was to live little more than a year and a half after writing these lines.

Except when (as in the extracts quoted above) he could look upon it as "a cleansing process," his attitude toward illness was the same as that he held toward evil. He came near to personifying it as

an enemy to be overthrown, and boasted of his ability to ward off and defeat its attacks. Conscious of his rugged strength, he would laugh at what he called its puny efforts to undermine him.

During his illness of 1927 and his convalescence therefrom he devoted much time to the preparation of a booklet commemorating the service of James Bronson Reynolds, Dr. Coit's successor as Head Worker of the University Settlement. This he undertook at the urgent solicitation of Miss Dike, Mr. Reynolds' sister-in-law, and rather against his own inclination, as he felt the task should have devolved upon some one closer to Reynolds than he had ever been. "Nevertheless," he writes upon completion of the memoir, "I have handled the entire material with as complete fairness to himself as his closest friend could have shown."

XVI

THIS brings to an end the record of his achievement.

He died during the night of April 24, 1929, in his room at the University Settlement, being found late the following day, lying fully clothed upon his bed. For some weeks previously he had been sitting for his bust to the sculptor, A. Butensky, and it is probable that the continuous posing sapped his strength. Only the Sunday before he had gone with Butensky and others to visit an interesting ruin in Rockland County, and the party, having been overtaken by a storm, were soaked to the skin.

When he died the newspapers called attention to the fact that he left an estate of less than five hundred dollars, and that entirely in books and a few works of art. With these as a nucleus the Settlement has furnished a room that is dedicated to the perpetuation of his memory, while at his favorite spot in the Park—at the Rock of Ages—his friends with the assistance of the Park Department, have set a memorial bench. Here and at the Settlement amid his own books and pictures, a bit of his spirit may be recaptured, but it is only in the minds of those intimately associated with him that his compelling personality lives on.

Meanwhile the work he did will continue to benefit generations ignorant even of his name. As the poet Clough says:

Others, I doubt not, if not we,
The issue of our toil shall see:
Young children gather as their own,
The harvest that the dead have sown,
The dead forgotten and unknown.

Part Two

RECOLLECTIONS
AND
APPRECIATIONS

STANTON COIT

STOVER was as different—and in the same way—from every other mortal whom I have ever known as was Socrates from all the other Athenians of his day. Not only was he unlike others in outward appearance; but whoever gained access to his mind found within, as Plato says of Socrates, divine and golden images of surpassing beauty.

Nor was it difficult to gain access to Stover's central being, for his was a personality which revealed itself unmistakably and fully in every chance remark he made, in his outbursts of fun or righteous indignation, in the quick gesture, the sudden change of speed and tone in speech, in smile or frown, in the lighting up or darkening of his countenance.

Everything that was confirmed afterwards by his work as a social and civic reformer through years of self-sacrificing devotion and unerring moral insight into men and events, was disclosed by his unconscious revelation of himself in the first conversation he had with me in 1886, when he came to Forsyth Street.

Although Stover's career of beneficent deeds and noble plans was in itself worthy of public commemoration, its supreme worth, like that of all his

conversation and of his personal friendships lay in its revelation of the man himself, who was infinitely greater and finer than could ever be expressed in civic activities.

Stover was not of this world—the world of present-day moral confusion, self-centered ambition and grab. The fact, therefore, that during his lifetime New York saw his worth, gave him scope for civic service and after his death erected a lasting memorial to him in his own beloved Central Park is to me a proof that the “Imperial City”, despite all appearances to the contrary, is itself, and was at heart akin in spiritual genius and character to our revered Stover.

LILLIAN D. WALD

CHARLES B. STOVER and his friend Edward King were almost the first connections I made before moving to the East Side of New York. They had given years of devotion and consecration, not only to the unnumbered individuals but to the great social causes that had few who comprehended and even less who were ready to give time and thought to the essential propaganda of the day.

Before I had any knowledge or acquaintance with the outstanding personalities of that congested and then practically unknown part of the world, Helen Moore, Librarian at the University Settlement, said she knew two men who "know all about everything in that section of the world and who would be helpful in finding suitable living quarters for you."

Mr. Stover lived on Forsyth Street, where I called upon him one rainy day and became acquainted. He and Edward King were in his "study". The room was book-lined and the desk was covered with documents, letters and the usual paraphernalia of a busy man's desk. To a casual observer it seemed little short of clairvoyance to know where important data lay, how to extract correspondence, etc. But Mr. Stover was in many

ways clairvoyant and I doubt whether anybody ever questioned his statements, historically accurate and the result of a scholarly research into what lay beneath the disputed points.

Though Mr. Stover had selected Forsyth Street for his home, it soon became a Mecca to people with problems. I remember tall and high-booted callers, lusty husky men from Roumania or some unhappy corner of the earth, filling his room to ask for help or interpretation, but the callers were promptly dismissed on my arrival and Mr. Stover, accompanied by Mr. King, without preliminary questioning as to why I sought knowledge of his neighborhood, started with umbrellas to guide me through it.

In the dripping rain my guides led me from street to street and then suddenly Mr. Stover, with jerky head movements emphasizing his decision, said: "Why don't you live with those girls at 95 Rivington Street?" He referred to the College Settlement recently established by "nice girls", as he characterized them, at this address, and explained that they called their house a College Settlement.

Under the umbrellas they continued to acquaint me with the conditions, giving me important introduction to them and at the same time paying tribute to their belief in the sincerity of the girl walking beside them, by indicating the "red light" district and other evidences of a world already known to them but, of course, not suspected by the new comer. This unconventional pair showed

chivalry and regard for conventions but that in no way clouded their desire to be frank and instructive.

That first call and tour under Mr. Stover's guidance was followed by many occasions when help was sought and given and good fellowship established, though sometimes disagreements were recorded, and this relationship continued until his death.

Unless people came under the influence of his rare qualities, albeit occasional difficulties, it would be hard to impart the characteristics that made him unique and unforgettable. Though there were some who were not unaware of his "peculiarities", I do not believe that anyone who came under his influence ever questioned his sincerity, his ability and the rare combination of his qualities. There seemed to be no interest in life that was not appraised by him.

Almost before Mary Brewster, my companion, and I were settled he enlisted our co-operation in securing signatures for the petition to open the Metropolitan Museum on Sundays and we worked together harmoniously on committees for recreation, for play-grounds, for municipal subway control and for social measures consistent with his clear concept of what might constitute an orderly civilization and a just consideration of man's rights.

It would not be complimentary to Mr. Stover to omit to illustrate the "difficulties" that his faithful friends encountered in working with him. As an illustration, a meeting called at the Henry

Street Settlement to organize the protest against the erection of the obnoxious Elevated on the approach to the new Williamsburg bridge: Mr. Stover was elected Chairman and all associated with him can recall his energy, his zeal, his marvelous ability and his characteristic dropping from sight and communication when the little Committee that was formed looked to him for daily direction. But in due time he returned, took up the struggle and nothing was said by him or to him. Those who knew him understood that it was just Mr. Stover.

Other instances might be cited but it is due his memory to explain that those who knew him were mainly disturbed because they traced his difficulties to a probable deeper struggle within. One felt that he suffered gripping pangs because he saw more and felt more than could be formulated and that his greatest problem must have been to keep faith with himself despite repeated discouraging frustrations and failure to see any measurable rise of concern or interest.

There is no doubt that to many people, certainly to all the people who knew him and worked with him, and to many who merely glimpsed his devotion, his occasional erratic movements never obscured the picture of unselfishness, intelligence and rare qualities of Charles B. Stover. He stirred them by his erudition and his vision of a society that would ultimately recognize the equality of all, and the shrine upon which he laid his best thought and the best years of his life was the essential right

of all people, not a few, to beauty and romance. Municipal ownership of transportation, the rights of the minority, the protection of strangers, the fearless protests against racial tyranny and racial prejudice seemed not to dim his reverence for the classics or his delight in the apt quotation or his approval of the esthetic—an odd mixture of a unique personality. To those who had the privilege of working with him his memory is entirely of a stimulating personality, a completely selfless man.

MARY K. SIMKHOVITCH

WHEN I went to the College Settlement in the fall of 1897, the Executive Committee of the Outdoor Recreation League used to meet in the head-worker's office. Dr. Jane Robbins was the head-worker at that time, and her office, which was also the sitting room and centre for hospitality in the House, was the large back room on the second floor of old 95 Rivington Street. It was a cheery place, with its windows to the South and plenty of books about. There came among others Mr. Charles Watson, Mr. Paulding, Mr. Joseph Price, Mr. Gregory Weinstein and the heart of the group—Charles B. Stover. The purpose of the League was to develop public playgrounds for children's use. The backyard playground at 95 Rivington Street was a fine example of what could be done by a private family or a settlement. But Mr. Stover's hope was that the City itself should look after the needs of the city's children. Mr. Stover was living at 146 Forsyth Street, a rather dark old tenement, at the time, having moved there from his original residence at the Neighborhood Guild. Mr. James Reynolds was at that time head of the University Settlement, and he was busily engaged, when I first met him and Mr. Stover, in developing plans for

the new building at 184 Eldridge Street which Mr. James Speyer's generosity made possible.

Mr. Stover would come into the meeting, his blue eyes brightly fixed on the playgrounds his hopes envisioned. He had a somewhat, shall I say fanatical manner, uneasy but determined. He would at once plunge into the subject and hold the leadership in discussion and plan. Sometimes, but rarely, these meetings would take place in Mr. Watson's residence in Central Park South. Indeed, it was often said that Mr. Stover would not step his foot north of Fourteenth Street, except to go to Mr. Watson's home. But of course he finally did go north of Fourteenth Street, when, in Mayor Gaynor's administration he was appointed Park Commissioner. Into this job he put all his passion and knowledge. When he was set on some special project he could think of nothing else. Rockaway filled his thoughts night and day until the Jacob Riis Park was finally established.

It was Stover who first conceived and finally brought into being Seward Park. When, the following year, I left the Lower East Side to marry and move into the Friendly Aid House on East Thirty-Fourth Street, Mr. Stover helped me to get the neighbors interested in what was first known as the Kip's Bay Playground and which later developed into St. Gabriel's Park. From one section he went to another, always taking advantage of every opportunity that made the acquisition of play space possible. But he was as interested in

parks as in playgrounds, thinking of these features together as outdoor recreation for the people. All that related to nature interested him. Of all the people I ever met, Stover was the one who most clearly conceived of nature as the home of humanity. It was Stover who married people to nature in a quite unique way. He wanted them to enjoy their life out of doors, and he wanted the out of doors to welcome people. He saw Rockaway Beach waiting for people, and people eager to go to Rockaway.

It was, of course, Stover's singlemindedness which so definitely characterized him. And yet, with all his extravert traits, there was something withdrawn about him, as if he cared only to disclose his activities, while holding shyly and inviolate some core of his personality which was simply his love for all his fellow men. This almost mystical quality often led him to disappear from time to time, only to return to his activities with renewed zest.

HENRY MOSKOWITZ

MY RECOLLECTIONS of Charles B. Stover go back to my boyhood days when I lived in a tenement on Forsyth Street. I still remember the number—153. The location of the first Neighborhood Guild was on that street. The earliest pioneers were Stanton Coit, Charles B. Stover, John McG. Goodale, James K. Paulding, Edward King and Helen Moore. I recall the Stover of those days vividly. He always had those luminous eyes and his smile was most contagious, but he could also be firm and angry at the slightest injustice. He was a magnet to us little boys, there was something about him that made us love him even though at times he was very severe. I remember vividly his office on the stoop of 146 Forsyth Street. It was a chaotic looking place—papers were strewn all over the floor at times and on the desk.

We were greatly excited when he asked us boys to distribute a petition to which an interesting story is attached. Mr. Stover deplored that the Metropolitan Museum of Art, an institution which housed most beautiful works of art, was not accessible to the working people, because on the day when they could enjoy it, it was closed—Sunday. He went to Mr. Cesnola, then the director of the

Museum, and demanded that the institution be opened on Sunday. If I recall correctly, Mr. Cesnola declared that the people did not want to come to the Museum and Stover made up his mind to demonstrate to him that there was a popular demand. So with characteristic thoroughness he drew up this petition and had the boys circulate it in the stores on the East Side. He got thousands and thousands of signatures. They constituted a most eloquent argument for the opening of the Museum. Stover brought them to the Director and as a result the Museum was open to the people. Later when they swarmed in the Museum on Sundays, Mr. Cesnola, I understand, pointed with pride to those petitions locked in a safe. This is one of the many achievements of Mr. Stover on behalf of the people of the city.

I can recall Stover's tireless energy. He worked day and night in that little office. He was not only interested in making the graphic arts accessible to the people, he thought they should also participate in singing great oratorios and chorals. He used to talk to us about the capacity for uplifting enjoyment which the Germans possess and he admired their Gesang Vereinen. It was Stover with a group around him and Frank Damrosch that brought about the People's Choral Union. Mr. Damrosch was the first director of this fine organization. I became a member of it and sang badly in such fine oratorios as the Elijah and the Messiah. To Charles B. Stover's tireless devotion is due in large part the

success of this popular choral society in the early nineties.

Charles B. Stover had vision. Long ago he pointed out the need of a city plan. Even in those days he saw the connection between the crowded East Side and an adequately planned transportation system, and when they talked about establishing a subway, it was Stover who insisted that it be municipally owned and operated for the benefit of the people. At that time he had behind him the Chadwick Civic Club, which was an organization of Mr. Stover's few friends and colleagues on the East Side, who were Stover's sounding board. The fight for municipal ownership of the first subway was a dramatic and strenuous one. Stover had against him the powerful N. Y. Chamber of Commerce, but in his tireless and self-effacing way he was instrumental in putting into effect this principle of the municipal ownership of a transportation system so vital to the welfare of the people and so important in bringing about the proper location of housing for the people.

Charles B. Stover was the pioneer in the movement for establishing parks and playgrounds for the people. Well do I remember Stover's eloquent pleas on behalf of children. I can see him now watching sadly the little children play in the gutters of Forsyth Street. I can see the vision in his eyes of playgrounds with sand piles, swings, basketball equipment and all the paraphernalia which we now associate with a city playground. It was

Stover who was the first President of the Outdoor Recreation League, the pioneer organization to establish a campaign for more parks and especially playgrounds for the under-privileged children of the tenement district.

Stover had not only vision, but combined with it was an indefatigable energy, a capacity for spending himself, which because of its intensity led at times to a depletion of nervous force which caused a breakdown. We young men who had the privilege of seeing him work were inspired by his example of self-effacing public service. It meant a great deal to us to see him tackle a job. His thoroughness was contagious. When he explained the reason for erecting a building with a bandstand, it would take him a half hour to an hour to go into the historical background which led him to choose the particular type of Italian architecture. His knowledge of the history of art was profound. His singleness of purpose in line with his unflagging energy, as well as his thorough mastering of a problem explain his success.

Seward Park, that interesting playground in the heart of the East Side, is the child of Stover's dream. Day and night he worked on it and when Mr. William R. Willcox was Park Commissioner, he acted as volunteer Superintendent of Parks and Playgrounds, and laid out many of them throughout the city. The window of that little office on the stoop of 146 Forsyth Street was lighted up way into the morning and Stover could be seen

at his desk working on papers, studying and planning to realize the dream of a city dotted with parks, planted with trees and flowers, where the old could sit and dream, and playgrounds where youngsters could shout and play.

Many of us remember the East Side Civic Club; it too served as Stover's sounding board. The membership consisted chiefly of East Side people and a few public spirited up-towners. The most important work which the East Side Civic Club did was to back up Charles B. Stover's fight for a "Champs Elysées" on Delancey Street. As a result of activities the present Schiff Boulevard was established. I shall never forget my meeting with Stover early in the morning while the Boulevard was being built. There was that far away look in his eyes. I had to tap him on the shoulder to bring him back to earth. He did not even greet me, but said as though he was continuing his ruminations, "I have just been wondering whether Norway pine or poplar trees would be best adapted for the soil of Delancey Street."

Stover followed through from the blue-print to the finishing details of every job he was interested in. That was why when Gaynor was elected Mayor the thought came to me as Edward King, Stover and I sat in Armbruster's Cafe on Second Avenue, that Stover should be Mayor Gaynor's Park Commissioner. I put it rather smart alecky and said, "I think Gaynor is just crazy enough to make you Park Commissioner," and then Stover

decided to see Mayor Gaynor in his home in St. James Place in Brooklyn and for an unworldly person I was delighted with what he said after he had seen him. He was ushered into Judge Gaynor's library and after he had been greeted said, "This library is very familiar to me." The Judge said, "Why?" Stover replied, "Because in this library I appeared with a committee to offer you the nomination for Governor." I never thought that Stover had such a diplomatic instinct.

Gaynor was quite familiar with Mr. Stover's record and after a long conversation, he suggested that Stover get the proper backing. A committee of East Siders went to work. We obtained the support of the Jewish newspapers and then we got in touch with Robert Adamson, the Mayor's secretary. I remember some of the members of the Committee who went to the City Hall. Julius Blumberg, the stationer, and I met the Mayor. He greeted us with a certain cold dignity, but not repellent indifference. I shall never forget the questions he asked us. The first was, "What does Stover do when he gets up?" I answered, "He buys all the newspapers to find out what the city departments are doing about the many public matters he is interested in." The second question was, "Would Stover be taken in by a rabbi or a priest on a sentimental project?" My answer was that his record proved the contrary. His third question, which was the most important was, "Is Stover an administrator?" We wisely referred Mayor Gaynor

to William R. Willcox under whom Stover worked as Superintendent of Playgrounds. Mr. Willcox gave Stover a splendid recommendation and Mayor Gaynor appointed him.

His record as Park Commissioner is now history. Unfortunately, the constructive things he did were not appreciated because he couldn't interpret himself to newspaper men and the public. Two months before the end of his term Stover was seized with one of those periodic depletions of nervous exhaustion and he disappeared for a while. However, Mayor Gaynor appreciated the wonderful service he rendered. Gaynor was a mixture of the genius and the showman. He had rare qualities. He was one of the most scholarly and distinguished personalities that ever occupied the Mayor's chair in the City Hall. He had the gift of style that captured the imagination of the people. He understood Stover and despite the criticism that was leveled against him he stood by him. Gaynor was a big man who appreciated bigness in another person. Stover had two defects as an executive. First he could not delegate. He had to take care of a job from bringing to end. This caused a great drain upon even his unflagging energies and resulted in his illnesses. Secondly his interest in details caused him at times to confound the trees with the forest. He lacked a sense of proportion so necessary in an executive.

It was fitting that Stover should end his activities where he began them at the University Settle-

ment. He was the soul of the settlement for many years. Carrying out his faith in the democratic principles underlying the Neighborhood Guild, he succeeded in getting the old boys who became successful to become the pillars of financial support of the settlement. He saw his dream of settlement boys as members of the governing council come true. He remembered the children to the end of his days and left them a camp on Mount Beacon, which was Stover's creation. How he loved to talk about it! How he worked on every detail of the place!

Behind all his substantial achievements was a spirit much bigger than even his good works. To come under its spell was an enriching experience.

JOSEPH M. PRICE

MRS. PRICE and I first met Stover at the Hudson Bank, now the DeWitt Clinton Playgrounds. Mrs. Price was interested in establishing a playground on the West Side, on a vacant lot that had been promised her, and in search for some one who knew anything about equipping and running playgrounds, every one referred her to Stover. The only place at which they thought he might be found was at the playground above mentioned. We went over there one Saturday afternoon and Stover was pointed out to us. That was the beginning of a friendship that lasted until his death.

He was skeptical at first, for we soon found out that Stover's plan of work was, that if you wanted anything done you must do it yourself. He was the moving spirit of the Outdoor Recreation League, formed in 1898 (though he was President of it for only a few years) under whose auspices the Seward Park Playground on the East Side was started and run until it was taken over by the City. The first one.

This was the beginning of the outdoor playground movement in New York City.

Stover was indefatigable in any piece of work he undertook and playgrounds was only one phase of his activities. He got along well with public officials, for they recognized the disinterested earnestness of the man, and the practicability

of his ideas. He never took "no" for an answer, but persevered until he got approximately what he wanted. It was through his zeal and foresight, that the City acquired Rockaway Beach, now Jacob Riis Park and he succeeded in keeping an elevated railroad off of Delancey Street and preserving it as an open Parkway as at present.

I never heard him criticise, even privately, the motives of a public official, no matter how much he differed from him. I never knew him to take a public stand in municipal politics—during or between elections. I am sure he had his opinions on the issues and men involved, but he was so immersed in his own projects that they took his entire time.

His friends were staunch ones, and no matter how often he made you feel like a worm, the worm never turned. One can never forget the twinkle in his eye and the cock of his head when he said the most scathing things; you knew there was never animus or bad feeling.

He was always loved by those who knew him best. He was so convinced that no physical harm could befall him; even in his last serious illness (a year or so before his death) he always said he was different from other men and could rise above all ills. If he was not watched, he would disobey doctors, but the doctors and nurses always succumbed to his charm and became his very good friends. One could not get angry with him.

We can never forget him.

JANE E. ROBBINS

MAY I add a word to the story of a singularly noble life?

I knew Mr. Stover first when he was managing the model tenement down on tough Cherry Hill. I felt in him then as always a wonderful man of practical sense, determination, and high spiritual idealism. When the old College Settlement on Rivington Street was young he was a source of much helpful information and many of our stimulating arguments on the daily problems of neighborhood life. Among our best memories are those of our struggles to bring into being the small parks and playgrounds so slow in coming.

As a citizen of New York he was a loyal patriot in every fibre of his heart and love of country burned with a pure flame because he wished well to all nations and races.

HARRY BEST

MR. STOVER was one of the real pioneers in organized social welfare movements in the United States. Starting out in the flush of early manhood with high scholastic attainments, and with a brilliant career before him, he, with one or two others, elected to come to the Lower East Side, now practically half a century ago, and founded the Neighborhood Guild, later to be known as the University Settlement, the first social settlement to be established in the United States, and following by but a few years Toynbee Hall in the East End of London. Here Mr. Stover remained, without having any other home, to the day of his death, giving himself for the betterment of human conditions on this East Side. His whole and undivided interests were with the people who were his neighbors in a real and deep sense. In their hearts, and in the hearts of great numbers who have gone from the East Side, he continues to have living memorials.

When the University Settlement at one time was in sore financial straits, and its future was problematical, it was Mr. Stover who set out to reach its "alumni," to make them understand, and to win from them a generous and continuing response—an achievement to be set down to the credit of very few settlements anywhere. The beautiful summer camp at Tioronda (Beacon) on the Hudson River is largely the work of his hands, as it is the expression of his dreams.

But what is most to be remembered and cherished, and what is most to be brought to the attention of youth, is the spirit of Mr. Stover, a spirit that makes hearts lowly and humble in its contemplation. Mr. Stover's rare intellectual gifts set him apart. As the relator of moving or stirring events, or of dramatic or enchanting scenes, he had few equals—whether upon the frescoes of Michaelangelo in the Sistine Chapel, or upon the creator of the first steamboat to be propelled in American waters, or upon George Washington's review of the triumphant American troops as they came down the Bowery after the Revolutionary War. If he had cared to leave the East Side and to devote himself to purely intellectual pursuits, he would with little doubt have achieved rank with the greatest of American historians. It is an irreparable loss, alike to American letters and to social welfare movements, that he never gave to the world his memoirs, which would possibly have been called "Half a Century on New York's East Side."

Mr. Stover's self-abnegation, his modesty, his utter inability to push himself forward, his mighty hatred of shams wherever they dared raise their heads—these were the only jewels he wore. And when he had passed away, his possessions were little more than his collection of books. Must his soul not have found communion with those chosen few who are permitted to walk with St. Francis, the blessed saint of Assisi?

JAMES H. HAMILTON

I AM certain that high service does not depend on high pecuniary compensation. An intimate acquaintance with Charles B. Stover during the six years of my residence at the University Settlement convinced me of that and I have lost no opportunity to refer to his career as an illustration of the terrible falsity of the prevailing idea that true greatness can be measured by a money yard-stick.

During my residence at the Settlement I knew no one who worked as hard or as constantly or as effectively—and without a penny of pay—and my fellow-workers in the field of social service were a zealous and conscientious and hardworking lot, and certainly not mercenary. With such an example before us, it could scarcely have been otherwise.

I cannot imagine that man ever shirking a responsibility in his relation to individuals or to a community.

He has told me enough about himself for one to know that he has had his period of doubt and uncertainty as to the character of service best adapted to his abilities—most notably the months he spent in solemn meditation in a small town in the Harz mountains, interrupting for that purpose

his studies at Berlin University. We know that he chose to serve in the field of social betterment. I doubt much if the thought of personal aggrandisement ever came to him.

He had no patience with the notion that destructive tendencies are ever essential to the normal development of children. He told me he had never been a bad boy. We all know that in his manhood he had not a trace of the *sissy*. We have seen him lose his temper on occasion in private conversation, but I never saw it out of control at a public hearing or at a conference with his fellow-workers, or on any occasion "when it becomes one to keep the heart warm and the head cool."

MEYER BLOOMFIELD

IN STOVER'S Forsyth Street rooms—"The Significant Rooms," to borrow a phrase from Pilgrim's Progress,—papers, circulars, envelopes, especially envelopes, were piled ceiling-high; and the driving force of a sweetly-smiling, considerate, yet fiercely determined little man with a shining face and delicate hands, turned those papers into winged messengers of public service. Boys in their teens came in and looked but a moment. They soon turned a brisk hand to reduce the paper bills—to address envelopes for Stover was a liberal course in civics.

Great things flowed from the unique methods of this unique servant of man; yet his enduring successes are the most impersonal I know. That Seward Park is not Stover Park tells something about him.

As allies, the Chadwick Civic Club and the Neighborhood Guild had their beginnings. I wish that the name of Edwin Chadwick, the Father of modern public health, had been kept alive. When he died at the ripe age of ninety in England about a generation ago, one of the world's greatest benefactors passed away. It was not without meaning that the names of Chadwick and Stover were linked together in the early East Side work.

One tries to catch the secret of that inner flame that could burn as brightly whether a city transportation system or a camper's tool-shed became the matter of central interest; always the same urge of eternal necessity went into Stover's jobs, big and small.

Outstanding in Stover's approach to any problem, and that partly explains the sureness of himself, was his preparation. He made himself the master of all the facts in all the languages he could command, before he advocated any given measure. He made himself the supreme expert for whatever he gave his energies to. It may be of interest to observe here that I saw something of the same method when I was allowed some years ago to look at Mr. Edison's note books and papers in his library and visit with him.

Stover in his early thirties came to the East Side—to paraphrase Bunyan, “a place also most strangely haunted with evil things, as many are able to testify; but these women and children went better through it, because they had daylight, and because Mr. Great-Heart was their conductor.”

Great-Heart Stover! A man who “wist not that his face shone as he spoke.”

LOUIS LANDE

THE East Side has been the scene of activity of many fine personalities who have toiled long and ceaselessly for its improvement. Many of them were idealists, many were practical,—but only a few of them combined both qualities. Such a man was Charles B. Stover.

To recount some of his activities is to give a history of social reform in the City of New York and particularly on the East Side during the last thirty years.

As long ago as 1885 he became interested in the problem of better tenements and was a director of the model tenements erected on Cherry Street. Subsequently he became a resident of the University Settlement and bent all his energies toward the solution of larger problems. . . . The establishment and improvement of Seward Park is due mainly to his tireless efforts. He introduced athletics on the East Side, where up to that time such recreations were not looked upon with favor either by young or old. . . .

The finest improvement on the East Side, due solely and entirely to Mr. Stover's efforts, was the widening of Delancey Street, the building of the beautiful station at Suffolk Street, and forcing the

bridge commissioner to take down the unsightly "L" structure on the bridge, thus preventing him from building an elevated railway on Delancey Street and connecting it with the 2nd Avenue Elevated System. Anyone who knows the effort necessary to get public officials to undo their work will appreciate what it meant for Mr. Stover to compel the authorities to do this at an expense of several hundred thousand dollars.

Mr. Stover went to Boston at his own expense, studied the combined subway and elevated system of that city and then persuaded the so-called transit experts of New York City, who should have known better to begin with, to put the bridge cars underneath Delancey Street instead of on it.

These are a few of the things Mr. Stover accomplished for the good of the City and the East Side, some single-handed and some with the help of a few friends, and at small expense.

The business people and landlords of the East Side were not educated enough at that time to see that their own interests would be best promoted by spending a little money for the improvement of their own holdings and of the surroundings. This they subsequently learned at a great loss to them and when it was too late.

STANLEY BERO

OUT of the mouths of babes wisdom often comes and it will so continue to be derived. When, therefore, one is confronted with the task of writing a chapter dealing with a certain phase of the life of one who like Charles B. Stover wrote few letters and received in turn only a limited number, there is but one way of creating a true picture having real value. And so the writer felt that material regarding his friend of many years could best be obtained from those employees of the Park Department who served under Stover when he was Park Commissioner during the administration of Mayor Gaynor and who are still in the employ of the Department.

The narrative opens with John Smith, having served in the Department for twenty-nine years at the time of this interview. A laborer at the time, he remembers that in November, 1910, about 150 men including drivers, laborers, climbers and pruners, were to be laid off because of the lack of an appropriation to cover their salaries. They had held their positions for many years, many of them married, with large families. It was proposed to have the work done by other men under separate contract. After hearing their grievances Mr. Stover

decided to put them all back to work. This is what he said to them, as Smith recalls it: "You do your work with a love for the work and an appreciation of the fact that the parks belong to the people and the people must have the parks in good shape, and, what is more, they must do their share in keeping the parks from destruction."

Emil T. Delaney, who started in the Park Department as a laborer in 1906, was assigned to his bit at Central Park and also served part of his time as Stover's chauffeur. Thus he had plenty of opportunity of listening to the Commissioner as he spoke to the men at work, and this is the tribute he pays to his former chief: "My respect and loyalty to the memory of Charles B. Stover, who walked and talked humbly even with the men of the plainest and most illiterate type, show what a godly man he was."

Herman L. Kissel, a pruner and climber, who obtained his experience from foresters working on estates, came to the Department in 1905, and is now foreman of the garage. In speaking of Stover's preference for certain trees, he said: "Mr. Stover manifested a great love for the Japanese Jinko. With its straight limbs shooting up from the ground and fine leaves it afforded shade like a parasol. Shady nooks, he often remarked, were a blessing on a summer day to the weary.

"The sour gum he liked next best. Hardy as even of the youngsters in Poverty Row, it thrived with little care, depending on its own resistance.

Its leaf, five-pointed, takes on a beautiful color in the Fall.

"He esteemed also the pine oaks. They are hardy, and require but little care. The Commissioner would have added, had he been given the proper allotment, many other needle trees of various shapes and lines because they created fine settings for statues and for visitors in search of a quiet retreat. To plant a woodlawn of needle trees in sufficient numbers to charge the air with their fragrance was one of his longings."

Another who remembers Stover well is Robert Hurton, now head-keeper of the Zoo, who came to the Zoo in 1905, having worked previously for Barnum & Bailey. He says: "Mr. Stover used to make his rounds through all the buildings of the Zoo every morning at 9:30, and he never missed this inspection. The animals christened by him he called by name but he did not neglect the others. He always asked me for sour apples, and the animals, sensing his approach, would begin to roar with pleasure. To the monkeys he would give bananas. He would ask many questions relating to the animals and would cautiously make suggestions, even giving orders, but hoping what he suggested might prove to be of value. He would listen to any request from the help or keepers with genuine interest, and while he made no promises to carry out their wishes, their suggestions seldom went amiss."

Among the park employes Stover is remembered

best by Hugh Murray, because he has been since its inception care-taker and gardener of the spot in the Park dearest to Stover's heart, the Shakespeare Garden. Born in Ireland sixty years ago, he has loved and tended flowers since he was a boy and can call them by their Latin as well as their English names. Stover relied much upon his professional acquirements, his industry, and the interest he brought to his work, and Murray still watches over their labors with a dignity and pleasure comparable to an inheritance which must not be squandered, but guarded with great care. He recalls that Stover was a celibate and embraced the whole of humanity in his paternal feeling. A certain group of larches, bought by Stover out of his own pocket to lend grace to a somewhat arid spot, are flourishing today by reason of Murray's cherishing care.

The "Rock of Ages," as Stover called it, a bit of mica rock covered with poison-ivy and avoided by all, was a favorite spot with him on account of the lovely vista it afforded, and down its slopes, with Murray's aid, he planned the Shakespeare Garden and made it a rendezvous for visitors who came to see him on park business. Other visitors came too, and from all walks of life,—all, in fact, who had in common the love of a garden. Often one heard a happy voice say "Whose idea was this?" and generally they answered their own query with the remark that it must have been some one who loved flowers and was a friend of the birds and of all forms of life. And this was certainly

true of Stover. It is fitting that the bench erected to his memory should be placed just here on the spot to which he came so willingly and where he held so many colloquies about the work he loved.

A word before we close about some of Stover's ways in the exercise of his duties. He would stop his car while on tours of inspection, get out, and shake hands with even the most menial laborers of the Park Department. He would ask the men for their first names and after that so address them. As a result the relationship between the Commissioner and even the humblest laborer was not only cordial but conducive to a degree of loyalty which a haughty attitude could never have created. Stover never wore a high hat. He never wore a dress-suit. But he carried himself with the dignity of a simple man. He performed his duties tirelessly and expected honest work from others without shirking. He thought that shirking responsibility was worse than forgetting to say grace. He liked to discuss with the gardeners and others the types of trees that thrived best in the thin soil of Central Park, as well as the shrubbery and the flowers and plants that might add color to the landscape. He caused selected palms and tropical plants to be placed wherever they could enjoy proper protection. In planning playgrounds he showed no preference for neighborhoods, nationalities or races. It happened often that the parish priest or local rabbi came over to exchange a few words with him, and on such

occasions his face would light up with the pleasure of their friendship.

Finally he believed thoroughly in the educational value of flowers, plants and every form of outdoor activity. Besides what he did in converting the Swedish Cottage into a field museum and school, where children were taught to model and draw from the specimen fauna and flowers collected there, he believed it possible to rid bad boys of their malicious and criminal instincts by directing their unplanned and spurious activities into organized healthy channels of play from which these young savages would emerge worthwhile members of the community.

Part Three

ADDRESSES DELIVERED
ON
MEMORIAL OCCASIONS

FELIX ADLER

THERE are two objects, I think, that a memorial meeting should serve—the one is to give the honor due to the friend whom we esteemed and loved while he was with us, the other to refresh in our minds the lineaments of his spiritual face, so as to preserve for our own advantage the influence of his virtues.

Briefly, for my own part, what I valued most highly in Charles B. Stover was his pure disinterestedness, combined with native refinement. He carried the atmosphere of culture with him. He had an exquisite sense of the perfections of art. And yet, when I first knew him, he was content to be the janitor of the Cherry Street buildings, and again to live in the offensive surroundings of the Forsyth Street tenement.

His achievements in connection with the University Settlement, as Park Commissioner, etc., are well known, and will be duly celebrated. What impressed me most was that he walked through the slums unspotted of the slums!

In the Vision of Sir Launfal, Lowell says: "Not what we give, but what we share." Not the giving or the sharing is the highest, but the being, and the giving and the sharing only as the outflow of the being.

JOHN H. FINLEY

ALL that Charles B. Stover left of material things on quitting this earth were a few books and papers ("worth about \$500."). The two men to whom letters of administration were issued by the Surrogate had but a pathetically slight office to perform. These documents were little more than evidence of a filial regard for a surviving relative and of the friendship in which he held those to whom he entrusted his petty belongings. Measured by monetary standards his life was an utter failure.

It is said that he spent a fortune of his own for others. However that may be, he gave himself utterly. Up in the country there are fields into which he led the tenement children; there are cool, still waters in which they forget for the time the heat of the city; there are flower gardens in which they are both the garden (they are being cultivated) and the gardeners (the cultivators). That is a part of the estate that he really left, though his title to it was only that he helped to make such a place before he had to walk through the valley of the shadow of death. But the greater part of his estate lay in the midst of the city for whose youth of alien birth or tradition his heart burned "with unselfish flame." He labored with unceasing activity that he might bring them into an understanding and love of their new country in spite of the disillusionments of the congestion, squalor and ugliness about them.

He was, as it seemed to me, a poor executive when in public office, but he was stubbornly true to the cause of those whom he thought most in need of the city's concern. He fought for playgrounds, for parks, for clean streets, for museum privileges on Sundays, for various civic reforms. His estate is virtually what he accomplished in making the lives of those to whom he chose to become neighbor, happier and brighter and physically and spiritually cleaner and better. The real administrators of his estate are those who have been led to greater civic zeal and higher living by his example and teaching. So let it not be said that he died poor, even though there are left such slight "corporeal hereditaments" as the law would say. He left a larger estate than can have adequate estimate in a surrogate's court.

I have thought of him as belonging to the Middle Ages, when men gave themselves to fight for some holy cause or went on pilgrimage to a holy place. So I have written of him:

'Mid dust of street, in heat and cold and rain
'Neath tenemented heights, through odorous vales
Unaccompanied of sun or glowing cloud
Of one clear star or of the circling host
He journeyed on through aging time;
But not to find an open empty tomb.
He sought the Kingdom of Heaven within—
And made youth happy in its neighborhood.

GREGORY WEINSTEIN

I HAVE been properly reminded by a member of the Memorial Committee that this is not a funeral occasion, but rather a reunion of friends of the departed Charles B. Stover, who meet to commemorate his life and labors for us and with us.

We are here tonight to tell one another of the blessed privilege we have enjoyed of knowing Stover, of the inspiration we have drawn from his leadership and from his companionship. Surely, no one who ever came in contact with Stover could fail to be impressed with his unique personality, his overpowering spirituality, his zeal in any cause that appealed to him, his tenderness to the weak and his unflinching courage in fighting for civic righteousness and against corruption and vice in high or low places.

It is in this spirit of felicitation that I am glad to share with you some of my experiences with Stover.

* * *

The last time I was privileged to speak from this platform was several years ago, at a meeting in memory of another immortal soul, Edward King. Stover presided over the exercises. A little over a year ago I sat with Stover in this hall watching the performance of "Disraeli" by Guild players on this stage. I was frequently with him in

this Settlement, whenever there was an interesting event. So, tonight, I feel somewhat strange on this platform, without the benign presence of our beloved Stover. But I am sure that you all feel, as I do, that his image and his spirit are with us here tonight. In the words of our old-fashioned American poet, Whittier, slightly paraphrased, I can say that:

His form is now before me, with no trace
Of death in its fine lineaments, and there
Is a faint crimson on his ardent face,
And his lips are softening with the smile
Which in his eye is kindling. I can feel
The parting pressure of his hand, and hear
His last 'I will see you soon.'

Strange that he is here
Distinct before me like a breathing being,
Even when I know he is with the dead,
And that the damp earth hides him. I would not
Think of him otherwise—his image lives
Within my memory as he seem'd before."

* * *

I first met Stover way back in 1884, when he was director of the first model tenement house on Cherry Street, founded by Dr. Felix Adler and Professor Edwin R. A. Seligman.

This tenement had a free kindergarten and a social hall for the tenants. When I came to live in that house, Stover's hospitable greeting and his warm handclasp sealed a pact of friendship between us, which even his death has not yet sundered. I

lost track of Stover for nearly two years, while he was studying in the Berlin University in Germany. In 1886 he returned to New York with Dr. Stanton Coit and both took rooms in an old-time tenement, at 146 Forsyth Street.

What the East Side was like in the pre-Stover days I will not stop to describe, except to relate a story I read in a biography of Bishop Potter. It tells that when Dr. Coit instructed a truckman to move his furniture from Park Avenue to Forsyth Street, the Irish truckman said to him, "You really don't mean to move to Forsyth Street. You are only kidding. I just moved out of there meself. It ain't a fit place to live in for the likes of you and me."

Just because of its unsavory reputation, Coit and Stover settled in Forsyth Street, and there they founded the Neighborhood Guild—the forerunner of this University Settlement and of the entire Settlement in America. I was invited to stay in the Guild house as an observer, and I was privileged to watch Stover and his band of fine young men and women who came to the Guild as residents and co-workers. My contacts with these people served as a beneficent education for me. As a recent immigrant, all I then knew of America and of Americans was the lower East Side with its conglomeration of people only recently emigrated from Eastern Europe. My induction into a circle of cultured Americans, refined yet simple, wealthy yet unassuming, was a revelation to me. These men and

women came to the East Side to exchange experiences, to teach and yet to learn. Many of them like Stover, were genuine Christians, but they did not carry their religion on their fronts. They set an example, not merely of tolerance, but of *understanding* and appreciation of whatever there was of value in the backgrounds and traditions that the foreign-born brought over with him from his native land.

When Dr. Coit left for England, Stover became the head-worker, and before long the Neighborhood Guild became a veritable bee-hive of activities, for the improvement of the neighborhood as well as for the city. To work with him was an interesting experience. Organizing committees, getting up petitions, distributing circulars, sending out letters for this or that civic purpose. Stover had no time schedule; we sometimes worked with him all through the night into the early hours of the morning. As a confirmed bachelor he had little sympathy with married men who had to keep dinner appointments with their wives.

There is hardly any need for me to enumerate Stover's services to the East Side, and to our city. To me, the outstanding labors of Stover, those which he has left as a heritage to us for all time are the opening and spreading of playgrounds throughout the city; the laying out of Delancey Street as a parkway, free from a planned elevated branch of the B.R.T.; the passage of a bill through Congress for humane treatment of sailors, the purchase by the City of land in Neponsit for the

Jacob A. Riis Park, which I am glad to state will soon be free of the aviation hangars.¹

But another, and perhaps greater achievement of Stover, one on which he spent years of energy, and most of his material fortune, was his successful battle for the principle of Municipal ownership of our Subways. This was a great and strenuous effort. Stover was up against the big men of finance and members of the Chamber of Commerce, who, under the leadership of Mayor Abram S. Hewitt, drafted a bill which provided corporation, the City to provide the capital by the use of its credit.

In face of great opposition Stover succeeded in persuading the State legislators to vote an amendment to the original bill, which provided for a referendum vote upon the question as to whether the roads should be built, owned and controlled by the Municipality or by private parties, corporate or otherwise. At an election on November 6, 1894, the voters of New York (then consisting of the boroughs of Manhattan and the Bronx), voted 132,647 for the amendment, to 42,916 against.

Thanks to Stover we own today all our Subways; what use we are making of our ownership is, of course, another story.²

¹ This address was written in 1930. In 1937 Park Commissioner Robert Moses has made Stover's dream of this park a reality. This park is truly Stover's own creation. I regret to find that the Park Associations have forgotten to give Stover due credit for it.

² During the years that the Independent Municipal Subway has been running Commissioner John H. Delaney has demonstrated that a railroad system can be built and managed honestly and efficiently by a municipality—just what Stover was contending for.

Stover's work as Park Commissioner under Mayor Gaynor has been belittled in some quarters owing to his so-called "disappearance" and his resignation two months before the end of his term. Yet, despite all the difficulties he had to contend with, his park record will prove his worth both as a planner and as a builder. Whatever he planted, whatever roads he built in the parks, were not patch-up jobs, but made to endure for generations.

While Stover was Park Commissioner he took me along on his inspection tour through the New York Public Library which had just been opened to the public. When Stover saw the catalogue drawers jammed in the middle and the new expensive shelving of the reading room warped and bent, he was boiling mad. "Look at this," he said to me, his face aflame with anger. "The architect and other officials have already approved the builder's voucher for payment; I am supposed to approve of it this very day. Do you think I will O.K. this rotten job? I'll be damned if I put my name on the paper before everything is made good."

You all know that where public welfare or public money was concerned Stover knew neither friend nor foe.

Despite his complete absorption in everything he was engaged in, Stover always gave us his human side—his kindliness, his patience as well as his rare outbursts of indignation and wrath. He showed a genuine interest in everyone around him.

He had an open ear for the struggles and tribulations of the young people of the Settlement, and whenever he could be of assistance to any of them, he gave of his time and means freely.

* * *

Stover spent the last few years of his life in working for the development of the Settlement Summer Camp. In that work he was happiest. The broad fields of the camp, bordered by Mount Beacon, seemed to gratify his love of the beautiful in nature and to calm his inner struggles. In the Camp he built his own monuments, literally with his own hands and with his versatile mind. When he found that the Camp was cut off from the waters of the Hudson, he made up his mind to bring water up to the hill. It was rather amusing to watch Stover trudging up and down the fields, his shoulders bent, with a divining twig in his hands, searching for water springs. But like Moses of the Bible, he did strike water in abundance, and as a result of his vision and persistence, thousands of happy youngsters are diving and splashing in the beautiful swimming pool at Beacon.

* * *

Though we will miss his bodily presence in the Settlement Camp, the flowers in the garden he planted, the water lilies in the pond, the shadows on the sun-dial, the great bell in the tower, and the splashing waters in the swimming pool will always speak to us of our beloved Stover.

In closing, permit me to quote again Stover's favorite poet, whose lines read as if they had been written of our departed friend:

Such was our friend. Formed on the good old plan,
A true and brave and downright honest man!—
Loathing pretense, he did with cheerful will
What others talked of while their hands were still.

His daily prayer, far better understood
In acts than words, was simply doing good.
So calm, so constant was his rectitude,
That, by his loss alone we know its worth,
And feel how true a man has walked with us on
earth.

ALBERT A. VOLK

How shall we fittingly honor him? Surely not by coming here to praise him. He cannot hear us. Aye, in life he would not listen to our praise.

Many have told the glory of his deeds and accomplishments in social reform — that he was a pioneer in social settlement work, a leader in the outdoor recreation movement, an incorruptible park commissioner, a faithful secretary of the Social Reform Club.

Those were but the poor vehicles through which his great heart strove on a mission accomplished only by the great men in mankind's history.

Not only did he strive to make this world fitter for mankind, but he ceaselessly urged mankind to be fitter for the world.

As Buddha, as Plato, as Socrates, as Moses, as Christ, as all those who will live on forever, he inspired us by teaching and living a "way of life."

As usual it was a struggle against an inimical world. It tried to belittle him and defeat him. His standards were so honest they seemed impractical to less scrupulous men.

Which of us remembers Stover's words, though on countless nights he spoke to us till daybreak. No, it is not for his deeds nor for his words that we remember him.

It is for that inspirational force which set our better side aflame, that shamed us out of pettiness, that bade us cast out the dross and that made us feel that in knowing him we were ennobled above the commonality of mankind and anointed to do service to the ideal.

Not what Stover was, not what Stover said, not what Stover did ensaints him, but what we are and what we will be if we follow the light he kindled in our lives.

And so today we place above his heart, a plain stone, the only tribute which he would not turn aside.

Thereon we tell him and all the world, that, *in our purer hearts, in our nobler souls, in our higher vision of life and of social service abides his immortality.*

HEYMANN FLIEGEL

FRIENDS, it is my lot to help celebrate Stover's 74th birthday with a brief discussion of what Stover meant to us, his *boys*. I must not, however, let this moment pass without reminding ourselves that one of his greatest boys, *Johnny Fliegel*, whose fire-place memorial is near-by, is now continuing his contact with Stover in the great beyond.

We, his *boys*, who are gathered here, always carry with us the thought that about this Stover Memorial are gathered the precious and intimate treasures of our Tioronda Camp life, our memories of the past, our determination to carry on for the future in the Spirit of Stover.

How sublime and inspiring are the thoughts and remembrances that are aroused in us by the repetition of that name Stover; Stover, the maker of men; Stover, the deifier of beauty; Stover, the master builder of gardens within and without one's self; Stover, the destroyer of sham and hypocrisy; Stover, the planter of beauty in our homes and in our souls; Stover, our guide and leader.

With the world in its present chaotic condition, with war permeating the world atmosphere, with the world a jungle of prejudice, passion and hatred instead of a commonwealth of brotherhood and of love, we must look to men like Stover for our

salvation. We must thank God that there are men in this world, who, like Stover, take up the cudgels for the oppressed, the weak, the helpless minority. It is men of Stover's type who, though pacifists that they may be, arm to the teeth in the struggle for human rights and social justice. They arm not with destructive weapons, but with weapons based on truth and righteousness and equality. These basic weapons of eternal principles must triumph and the sooner when preached and practised by men like Stover.

As one of Stover's *boys*, there appears at this moment before my mind's eye some of those precious memories heretofore referred to:

Shall we ever forget those midnight seances in Stover's room at the Settlement where, like the spiritualist and the magician, he conjured up for us the wisdom of the ages and honestly searched human experience and human thought for some new paths to truth and righteousness and beauty?

Shall we ever forget those precious moments when our shoulders would jerk backward as a result of being electrified by Stover's forefinger as he would drive home his point?

Shall I ever forget the expression on Stover's face when I arrived at camp one afternoon and advised him that the papers had announced that the matter of High Bridge would be decided by the Board of Estimate at its next session and how within ten minutes he was off to New York to gather his cohorts in his successful fight?

Shall we ever forget that New Year's Eve Party at Camp when at midnight, with all of us in gala mood standing on chairs and singing Auld Lang Syne, Morris Nagler offered a toast to Stover in the following words, "May you live as long as Moses!", and when Stover replied, "I shall out-live Moses", and how shocked we were when his prophecy was not fulfilled, for Stover shortly thereafter had gone to his reward?

Shall we ever forget Stover's thoroughness and zeal for becoming the expert and scientific farmer in his endeavor during the war to turn our camp's barren and rocky fields into a garden of paradise?

Shall we ever forget his thoroughness and zeal for becoming a medical expert in his endeavor to help our Mrs. Renard regain her health?

Shall we ever forget his thoroughness and zeal for becoming the expert photographer and how much joy his photo taking afforded us and what mementos of our camp experiences his photos supplied and still supply us?

Shall we ever forget those introductions of the boys and the girls and his broadcasting of the good qualities of each to the other and that out of many introductions some of us have chosen our life's helpmates?

Shall we ever forget Stover in his endeavor to remove our shyness and backwardness and his sympathy with all of us youngsters?

Shall we ever forget his leadership in those historical hikes?

Shall we ever forget his discussions about the search for a better world and his enthusiasm in following the Russian experiment for the purpose of finding, if possible, a searching ray that would illuminate the path to social justice?

No, friends, these memories and the many others, too numerous to mention here,—and those mentioned are mere random pickings—we shall never forget and they shall remain with us as fountains of inspiration.

Friends, when we sorrow that Stover is no longer amongst us, we must also remember that his loss is tempered by gratitude that we should have come in close contact with him and enjoyed the blessing of his warm-hearted friendship and leadership; we must also remember that Stover has set his mark upon us with such an individual and unmistakable impress that even time cannot eradicate and that we shall therefore be privileged to honor, cherish and idolize him so long as we shall be privileged to exist amongst the living.

In conclusion, may I say, that Stover's influence over us, his Settlement children, will stand as a monument infinitely superior to any words that we may utter here or elsewhere or to any expression in stone, mortar or bronze and that we can best honor our "Grand Old Man," Charles B. Stover, if we, his inspirational and cultural children, go on from strength, in honor, and with an ever-increasing grasp of what is fine and beautiful and durable in the achievements of his life.

Part Four

EXTRACTS FROM LETTERS

JOHN JAY CHAPMAN

(Addressed to Gregory Weinstein) :

Your letter of April 4 reached me last night and brings up many memories. I am extremely sorry to miss the meeting about Stover, as he is so vivid a figure of the past—in those early days of our fumbling efforts toward reform. Indeed we were all of us driven together by cosmic force and became a not very luminous aggregation of moral endeavor,—born of the times. But the times were drenched with other and alien elements,—with the rise of big business, with the Spanish war, with a conservative political reaction which swept us, as it were into the dust heap.

After that, most of the nation's enthusiasm for reform concentrated upon Roosevelt, who in his early days as Civil Service Commissioner had been a part of ourselves, but who was many other things beside, and became in the end a gigantic politician with an adopted role of nobility heroism, and a fascination for his admirers that subdued their critical judgment.

It was from the hand of Roosevelt that our early movements for independence in politics received a quietus. The group of thinking men to whom Stover belonged were the first to perceive this, and they are to be forgiven if they are the last to forget it.

The country's instinct for reform, when thrown

out of politics, turned with added intensity towards many forms of social work. In this field Stover had long been a solitary pioneer. Before the day of settlements he had, as I remember, gone to live in the Bowery, somehow feeling that that was the thing to do. He was a sacred man, a sort of priest, almost inarticulate, yet affecting everyone who met him. It was impossible not to revere him.

Though he talked about means and measures, and talked in a way that was difficult to follow, the message he conveyed reminded one of Emerson's saying that the Reform of Reforms must come without means.

He himself was a sort of symbol, and I hope that the meeting you speak of may result in placing a tablet or his effigy in the Settlement where he lived and labored for so many years.

J. G. PHELPS STOKES

(Addressed to J. K. Paulding) :

I greatly appreciate your exceedingly pleasant suggestion that I contribute a few words to the little volume that is being prepared in memory of Charles B. Stover. This I am glad to do, though not much given to writing reminiscences.

Mr. Stover was very dear to me. I admired especially his *quiet* and *gentle* way of of doing big things; his invariable kindness, even when greatly stirred; his ever courageous *modesty*; the depth of

his affection for the multitudes he so inconspicuously served.

I have known but few people big enough to rather resent personal praise for the fine things they were always doing. But Mr. Stover was one of these few. To him, selfless application to truly helpful service was all that really mattered; what people *said* mattered less than nothing; except in so far as what they said might be helpful or harmful to others than Charles B. Stover.

Would there might be more in our community, as elsewhere, as simple, fine and true, as patient, persevering and kind, and as effective in creative work for the public good as the friend who was so dear to us all!

LOUIS H. PINK

(Addressed to J. K. Paulding) :

I knew Charles B. Stover very well and was always an ardent admirer of him. I think I had a little something to do with getting him to move into the University Settlement. He was living around in furnished rooms and getting little comfort. He did not want to move into the Settlement because it was more or less institutional and much preferred to live with the real people, but we finally persuaded him to think a little bit about his own comfort. Very reluctantly he came in but I think he was glad that he did so. He got much more enjoyment out of life.

I think of him often at Berger's Cafe on Avenue C with a great stack of newspapers. He would always bring at least five or six newspapers with him when he went to eat a meal and would read them assiduously. I never met a man more devoted to his ideals or more sincere in following them up.

I know of one little incident which may not be a matter of general knowledge. When he was a candidate for the park commissionership he came to me to see what I could do. I was then working for Edward M. Grout and Stover thought that Mr. Grout could do something with Mayor Gaynor, his former law partner. I spoke to Grout about it and he said that Stover could do much better by going straight to the Mayor and having it out and that Gaynor was not interested in recommendations but liked to make his own appointments. I told this to Stover and he did go to Gaynor and, as you know, they had some very interesting conversations together which ultimately led to the appointment.

LOUIS STOIBER

Fifty years ago there entered into my place of business, a happy-looking young man who told me of his plans for the East-side of New York. It was Charles B. Stover.

He was one of the founders of the University Settlement, and soon reached the hearts of the young people of the neighborhood. The Lily Club

was one of his first efforts for boys, some of whom still live as useful citizens.

Later he urged the opening of the Metropolitan Museum on Sundays and was successful.

He wanted New York to build a subway and spent time and effort and large sums of his own to bring it about.

Large numbers of young men caught his spirit and were inspired to make the most of their lives. They could be seen carrying books on most serious subjects under their arms, to read during dinner hour, day by day. Out of this grew the famous Grand Street Boys Club, of successful business men and good citizens. They entered into his plans as President of the Outdoor Recreation League. The idea spread far and wide.

Later he performed his great work at Beacon for young and old. His motto was: "Yourself both garden and gardener be." It was delightful to hear him speak in the most modest way of his achievements, among them his service to the City as Park Commissioner. He also was successful in securing Rockaway Beach as the Peoples Playground.

He wrote "in grateful remembrance of the pleasant days in Monterey," where he finished the Memorial of James Bronson Reynolds. He enjoyed the trees of the Berkshires. His big-heartedness, his cheerful manners, his altruistic spirit and his courage won him the esteem of Josephine Shaw Lowell and thousands of others who loved him for what he was, as well as for what he did.

PAUL KLAPPER

(Addressed to J. K. Paulding):

My happiest memories of my association with Charles B. Stover go back to the time when I was a student at the College and he a resident at the University Settlement. Every Sunday evening we met in his room, most of us sprawled on the floor while Stover read poetry to us. It was in Stover's room and not in the English classroom at the College that I learned my Browning and my Emerson. I know that I shall be eternally grateful to Mr. Stover for these evenings.

PAUL U. KELLOGG

(Addressed to George Lion Cohen):

We always knew he was here because of the bark of his voice; and the half shy, altogether persistent drive with which he put forward the things that impelled him. He seemed to me like a gusty wind blowing through the East Side streets; but with all his vagrant spirit, his resistance to being put in a narrow groove, his was not a casual wind; it turned things and set them going.

There was a sort of guerrilla-like quality (in the best sense) in his activities; which was the very reverse of that of stodgy organizations which move in grooves consistently. The office of his social citizenship was under his hat—a very individual sort of hat at that.

ABRAHAM WALKOWITZ

(Addressed to J. K. Paulding) :

My memory of Stover is that of a notable personality coming to us from the clouds who devoted himself to providing the people with places in the parks and various recreation centres where humanity could foregather and commune together in sunlight and the open air surrounded by lakes and green trees—an idealist who worked unselfishly to make the government provide for the people's needs.

Humanity is in need of more men like Charles B. Stover, a noble stimulating spirit, and one of the pioneers in the movement to beautify the lives of city people.

JONAH GOLDSTEIN

(Addressed to J. K. Paulding) :

Charles B. Stover was a practical idealist. Often as a resident of the University Settlement did I hear him cry out against architects and sculptors who had designed and erected artistic public fountains, but had no provision for accessibility to the water pipes as and when repairs were needed. This lack of practicability on the part of sculptors and architects caused wasteful expenditure of public funds. Stover hated waste.

He accomplished more with less than any person I ever knew.

His whole life was one of service to causes and people. It was a privilege to know him.

ROBERT ADAMSON

(Addressed to George L. Cohen) :

I am delighted to know that steps are being taken to perpetuate the memory of a man who was such an ideal and unselfish public official as Mr. Stover was. I knew him for a great many years when he was active in civic work on the east side. This was prior to his appointment by Mayor Gaynor as head of the Park Board. I remember Mayor Gaynor speaking to me about him, telling me the impression which Mr. Stover had made upon him personally and I was delighted to know that the Mayor was going to include him in his cabinet. Charles B. Stover was unique as a public official. He was one of the few pure idealists that I have known to hold public office. Ordinary political or selfish considerations were utterly foreign to him. He was a man of almost stoic simplicity in his life and habits and because of his thorough altruism and complete devotion to a civic ideal, many people failed to understand him. This was a matter that gave him no concern, however, as he devoted himself with great single-mindedness to his job. He belongs to the very select few who, modest, self-effacing and courageous, devoted their whole lives to the public welfare, among them Jacob Riis and a few others whom I might mention who, modest as they were, left an indelible impress upon the city.

On November the 5th, 1936, in the presence of the Mayor of the city, Fiorello H. LaGuardia, and of his Park Commissioner, Robert Moses, to whose efforts the success of the undertaking was largely due, was dedicated on the rock overlooking the Shakespeare Garden in Central Park, a memorial bench of Vermont granite inscribed with the words:

CHARLES B. STOVER

1861 — 1929

FOUNDER OF OUTDOOR PLAYGROUNDS

WHO DEVOTED HIS LIFE TO PUBLIC SERVICE

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